

Six Musical Portraits

Jewish Music of the Holocaust

by

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Original Presentation at Temple Judea Mizpah

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Dedicated to the Memory of
Avraham Czerwin
One of the Six Million

Jewish Music of the Holocaust

- Abstract of Presentation
 - Jews in music prior to the Nazis
 - A survey of Jewish musicians and composers during the Holocaust
 - The variety of Jewish music from the period
 - Six Portraits focus on six genres of musical expression



Portrait One: Liturgical Music

Portrait One: Liturgical Music

- Chazzan Gershon Sirota
 - The Jewish Caruso



Portrait One: Liturgical Music



FROM CANTOR SIROTA'S
CONCERT
REPERTOIRE

רחמנא דעני
RACHMONO
D'ONE

The liturgical melody sung by Cantor
SIROTA with overwhelming success
on his American concert tour.

Composed by **LEO LOEW**
MUSICAL DIRECTOR OF
Tlomazker Synagogue, Warsaw.

Arranged for Voice with Piano or
Organ Accompaniment

Piano 75¢

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Portrait One: Liturgical Music

- Chazzan Gershon Sirota (Cantor)
 - Psalm 55, “God, hear my prayer; do not ignore my plea”



Warsaw Ghetto



Walling off the Warsaw Ghetto, 1940

Warsaw Uprising



Deportations

Warsaw Uprising



Ghetto in flames

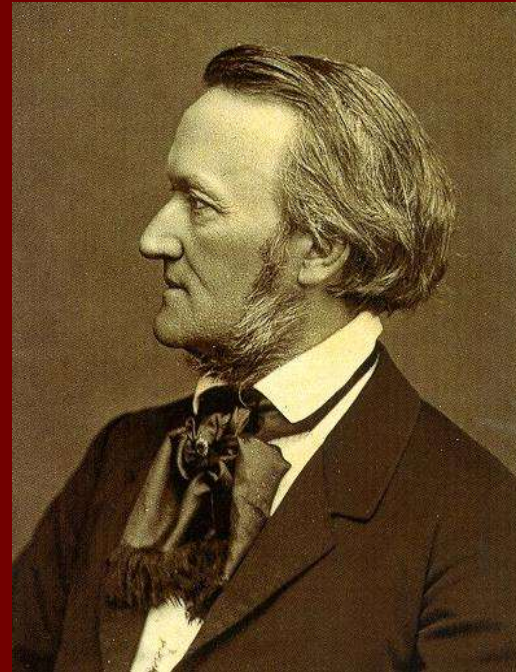
Portrait Two: Legacy of Mahler and Wagner

Portrait Two: Legacy of Mahler and Wagner

- Composers in the shadow of Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) and Richard Wagner (1813-1883)



Mahler



Wagner

Mahler and Jewish Identity

- “I am thrice homeless, as a native of Bohemia in Austria, as an Austrian among Germans, and as a Jew throughout all the world. Everywhere an intruder, never welcomed.” Gustav Mahler



Mahler's music often includes Jewish themes or reflects upon Jewish sentiments as heard in his First Symphony.

Mahler would have a profound influence on music of the 20th century and especially Jewish composers of the Holocaust period.

Portrait Two: Legacy of Mahler and Wagner

- In 1850, Richard Wagner writes an anti-Semitic pamphlet, *Judaism in Music* (Das Judenthum in die Musik)
- Wagner was Hitler's favorite composer
- The Nazis would exploit the pamphlet for their anti-Semitic propaganda

Portrait Two: Legacy of Mahler and Wagner

- Richard Strauss (1864-1949)
 - 1933 Appointed head of Department of Music in the propaganda Ministry
 - 1935 Fall from approval by the Nazi Regime



Portrait Two: Legacy of Mahler and Wagner

- Alexander von Zemlinsky (1871-1942)
- 💡 Excerpt from setting of Psalm 83



Portrait Two: Legacy of Mahler and Wagner

- Franz Schreker (1878-1934)
 - Excerpt from setting of Psalm 116, op 6



Franz Schreker, 1912



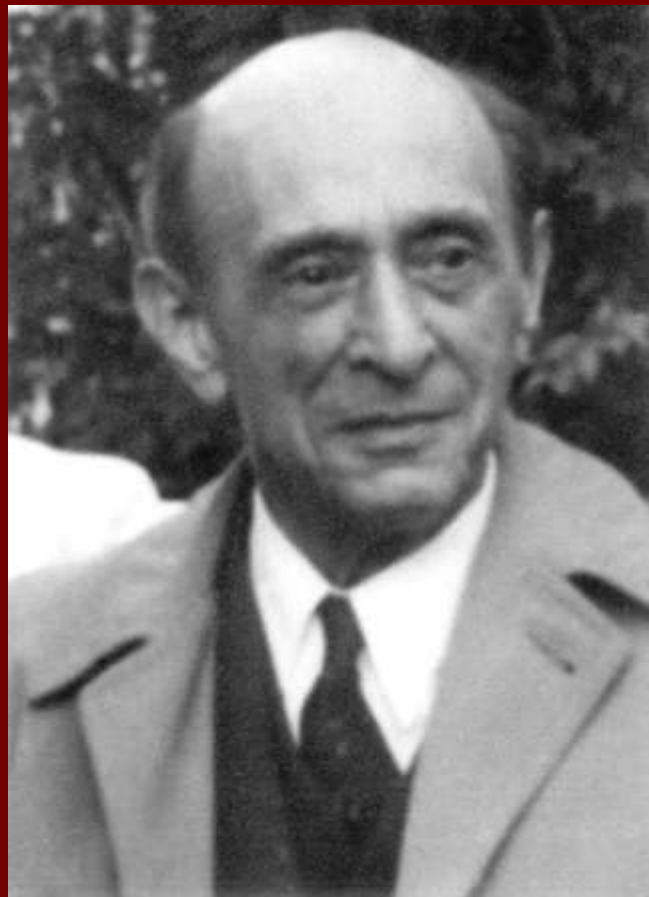
Franz Schreker, 1930



Portrait Three: Arnold Schoenberg and Modernism

Portrait Three: Arnold Schoenberg and Modernism

- Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951)



Portrait Three: Arnold Schoenberg and Modernism

- Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951)

- Music and Vienna

- Musical Innovations



Portrait Three: Arnold Schoenberg and Modernism

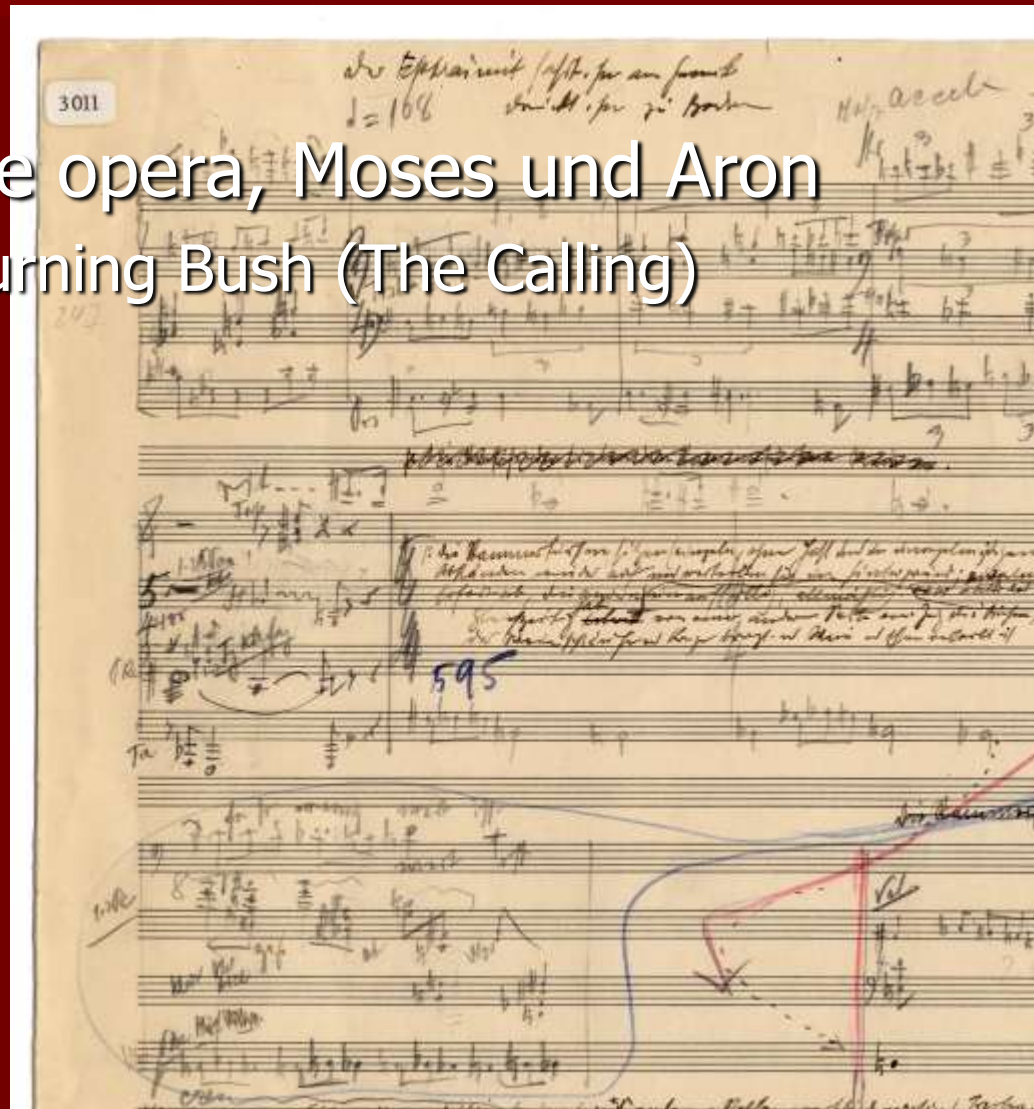
- Music Example –

- Six Little Piano Pieces, Op 19, No. 6



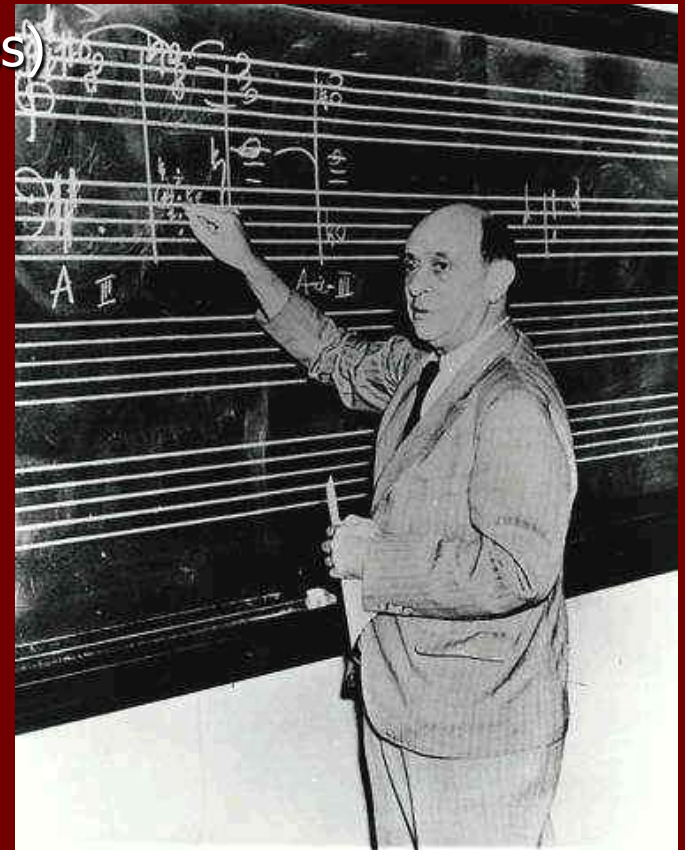
Portrait Three: Arnold Schoenberg and Modernism

- Excerpt from the opera, Moses und Aron
 - Scene at the Burning Bush (The Calling)



Portrait Three: Arnold Schoenberg and Modernism

- Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951)
 - Composer and Teacher
 - (Univ. of California, Los Angeles)



Portrait Four: Entartete (Degenerate) Art and Music

Portrait Four:

Entartete (Degenerate) Art and Music

- Entartete – A phrase the Third Reich applied to music and art that was labeled as Jewish, Degenerate and "Bolshevik"
 - Entartete Kunst Exhibit (1937 – Munich)



Portrait Four: Entartete (Degenerate) Kunst



Portrait Four: Entartete (Degenerate) Musik



Entartete Musik Exhibit (Düsseldorf 1938)

Portrait Four: Entartete (Degenerate) Musik

Prominent composers banned by the Nazis:

- Felix Mendelssohn
- Giacomo Meyerbeer
- Gustav Mahler
- Arnold Schoenberg
- Kurt Weill
- Also Jazz / Cabaret

Portrait Four: Entartete (Degenerate) Musik

■ Gideon Klein (1919-1944)



- Concert Pianist and Composer
- Interested in Czech Folk Songs
- Interned at Terezin
 - String Trio, 1 Allegro – Work completed days prior to being sent to Auschwitz



Portrait Four: Entartete (Degenerate) Musik

- Erwin Schulhof (1894-1942)

- Jazz Influence



- Hot Music

- Excerpt from 10 Syncopated Etudes, WV 92



Portrait Four: Entartete (Degenerate) Musik

- Kurt Weill (1900-1950)
 - Cabaret Composer
 - Emigrated to the United States in 1935



Kurt Weill

Portrait Four: Entartete (Degenerate) Musik

- Marlene Dietrich

- Cabaret singer / actress labeled degenerate



Marlene Dietrich

Portrait Four: Entartete (Degenerate) Musik

■ Cabaret Music

– Karel Svenk (1907-1945)



Portrait Four: Entartete (Degenerate) Musik

■ Terezin Hymn



Days will come, days will go,
Always moving restless crowd,
We can't write with only thirty words allowed.
Wait for we will see a newer dawn
Must rise to lift the heart,
The time will come to pack our bags
And home we'll joyfully depart.
We will conquer and survive
All the cruelty in our land,
We will laugh on ghetto ruins
Hand in hand
– Karel Svenk

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto



Streets of Terezín

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto



"Arbeit Macht Frei" (Work Brings Freedom) Slogan at the Terezin Gate, the same words are posted at gates of Auschwitz.

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

- History of Terezín (Theresienstadt)



Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

■ Conditions

- In a space previously inhabited by 7,000 Czechs, over 50,000 Jews were imprisoned.
- Food was scarce, disease was rampant

■ Statistics

- 140,000 people transported to Terezín
- 33,000 died from starvation, lack of medical care, disease and torture
- 87,000 people transported from Terezín to the Nazi death camps
- A total of 97,297 died among whom were 15,000 children
- Only 132 children survived

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

Terezín Composers

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

Viktor Ullmann (1898-1944)




Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto



- Viktor Ullmann (1898-1944)
 - Example of Music written at Terezín
- **Der Kaiser von Atlantis, oder Der Tod dankt ab** (The Emperor of Atlantis, or Death Abdicates)
text by Peter Kien (1943)

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

- Viktor Ullmann (1898-1944)
 - Der Kaiser von Atlantis, oder Der Tod dankt ab (The Emperor of Atlantis, or Death Abdicates)
 - Prologue (Loudspeaker) 

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

- Viktor Ullmann (1898-1944)
 - Excerpt from Piano Sonata No. 7, (1944)
 - Theme from a Hebrew Folksong



Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

Hans Krasa (1899-1944)



Composer to Children's Opera, Brundibár

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

Brundibár Performance at Terezín



Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

■ Brundibár Recordings and Books



Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

- Terezín Beautification program (Verschönerung) and the deception of the International Red Cross



Red Cross Commission arrival at Terezin
Drawing by Helga Weissova (1944)

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto



Kurt Gerron, Jewish film director, singer, actor and Terezin prisoner



Mackie Messer featured in the 1930 Berlin production
the **Three Penny Opera** (Weill/Brecht)

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

- “The Führer gives the Jews a City”



Still from the fraudulent film *Der Führer schenkt de Juden eine Stadt* showing The Ghetto Swingers with their conductor, Martin Roman

The movie includes the Jazz Group, The Ghetto Swingers

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto



Ghetto Swingers as depicted in propaganda film (1944)

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto

- Scene from “The Führer gives the Jews a City”

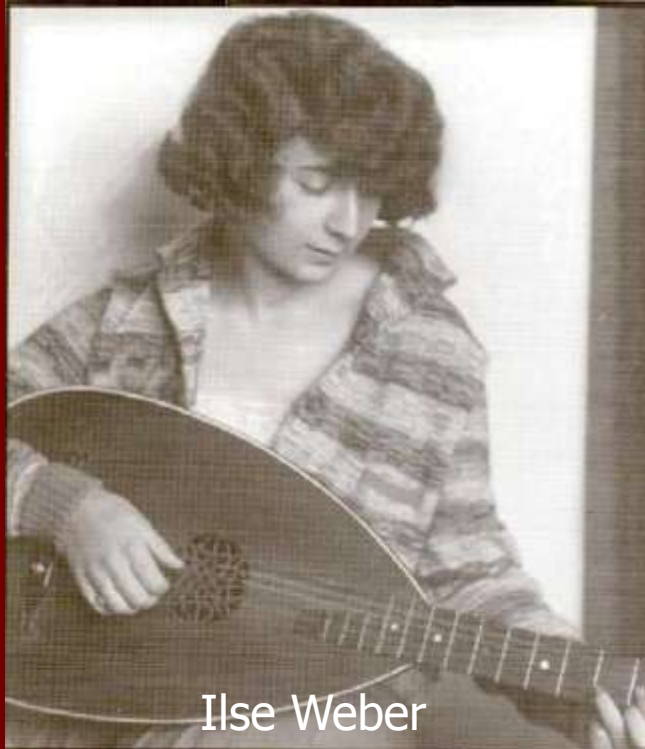


The movie depiction of Happy / Healthy
Children



Concert Scene

Portrait Five: Terezín Ghetto



Ilse Weber

I Wander through Theresienstadt

I wander through Theresienstadt
My heart is full of lead
Until the path abruptly ends
There is no way ahead



Upon the bridge I stand and see
The valley that unfolds
I wish the gates would set me free
I long to go back home

My home what magic in the sound
It tears my weary heart
They've robbed me of my home and ground
I never wish to part

I turn and walk back on the path
Abandoned and in pain
Theresienstadt, Theresienstadt,
Will suffering be in vain
Will we be free again?

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope

- **Music of the Extermination Camps**
- **Street Songs from the Ghettos**
- **Partisan Songs**
- **The Legacy and survival of music from the Holocaust period**

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope

■ **Music of the Extermination Camps**

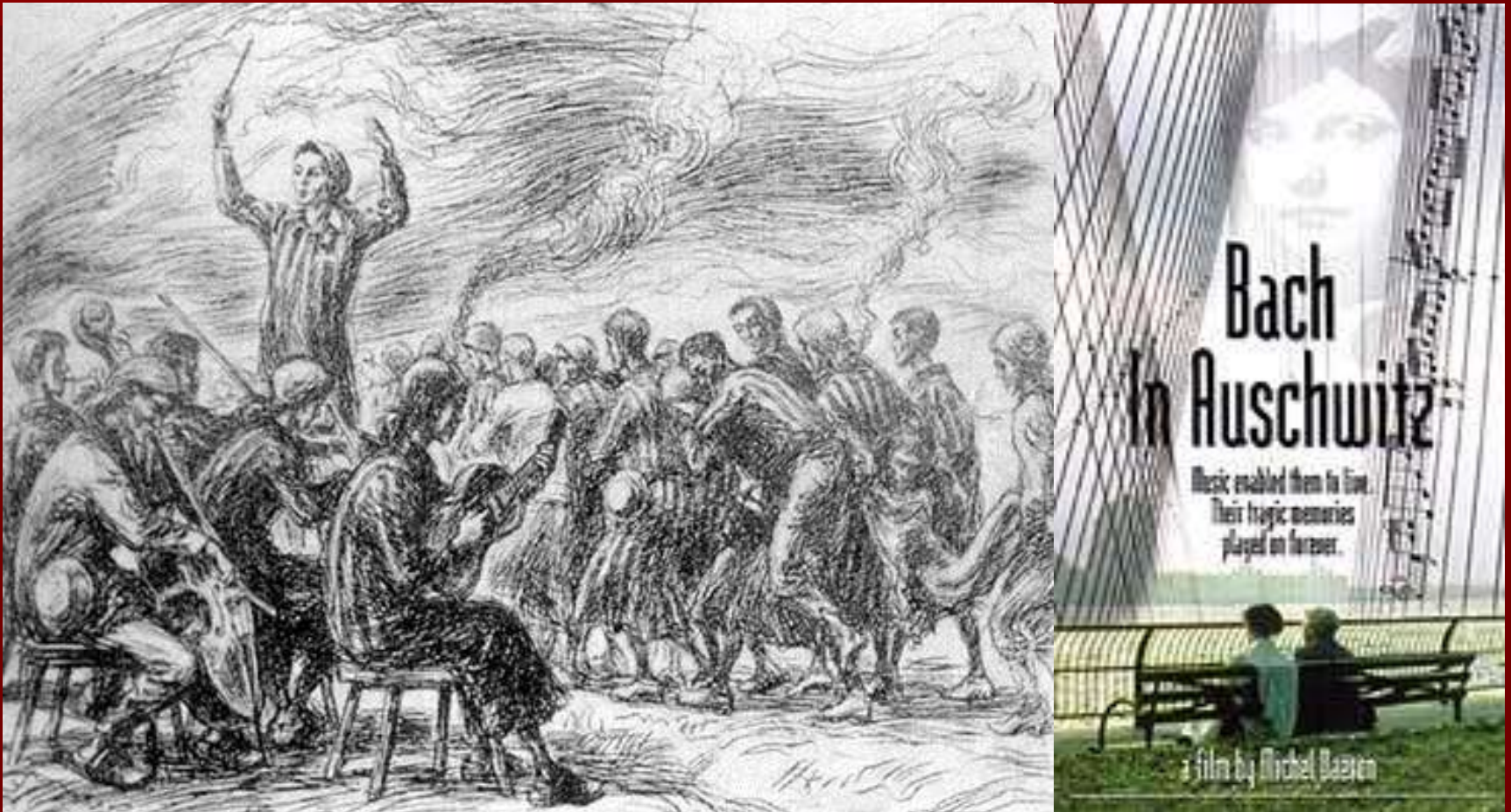
- **Why did the Nazis have orchestras in concentration and extermination camps?**

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope



Men's Orchestra Auschwitz

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope



Women's Orchestra Auschwitz-Birkenau

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope



Orchestra Buchenwald

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope



Orchestra - Janovska (Lvov)

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope



Orchestra Mathausen

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope



Children listen to a violinist at Westerbork Concentration Camp

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope

■ Street Songs from the Ghettos



Street Musicians in Warsaw Ghetto

Portrait Six:

Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope

- Mordecai Gebirtig

- **Es Brent** (Our Town Is Burning) written in 1938, became one of the most well known songs in the ghettos and concentration camps

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope

**Es brent, briderlekh, es brent.
Undzer orem shtetl, nebekh, brent!
Beyze vintn irgazon,
Brekhn, brenen un tseblozn,
Un ir shteyt un kukt,
Azoy zikh, mit farleygte hent.
Oy, ir shteyt un kukt
Azoy zikh, vi undzer shtetl brent**

**It is burning, brothers, it is burning.
Our poor little town, a pity, burns!
Furious winds blow,
Breaking, burning and scattering,
And you stand around
With folded arms.
O, you stand and look
While our town burns.**



Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope

- Music of the Partisans



Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope

- Music of the Partisans

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope



Hirsh Glick – (1920 b. Vilna, Lithuania. – 1944?)

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope

■ Hirsh Glick

- His poem, "Zog Nit Keyn mol," ("Never Say that You are Trotting the Final Path") became the anthem of the Partisans

Never say that you are going on your final path
Though leaden clouds may be concealing skies of blue -
Because the hour we have hungered for is near;
And our marching steps will thunder: We are here!
Because the hour we have hungered for is near;
And our marching steps will thunder: We are here!

Portrait Six: Music of Despair, Resistance and Hope

Shmerke Kaczerginski (1908-1954)

Partisan fighter, music archivist and publisher



Yid, du partisan

Fun di getos tfise-vent-
In di velder fraye,
Onshtot keytn oyf di hent,
Kh'halt a biks a naye.
Oyf di oyfgabes mayn fraynt
Kusht mir haldz un aksl,
Mitn biks kh'bin nit fun haynt
Fest tsunoyfgevaksn.

Veynik zaynen mir in tsol,
Drayste vi milionen,
Raysn mir oyf barg un tol
Brikn, eshelonen.
Der fashist fartsitert vert,
Veyst nisht vu, fun vanen-
Shturmen vi fun unter dr'erd-
Yidn-partizaner.

S'vort "nekome" hot a zin,
Ven mit blut farshraybst im,
Far dem heylikn bagin
Firn mir di shtraytn.
Neyn, mir veln keynmol zayn
Letste mohikaner,
S'brengt der nakht-di zunenshayn,
Der yid-der partisaner!

From the ghetto's prison walls
Into the free forests,
In place of chains around my hands,
I carry a new rifle.
On our rounds, this friend of mine
Hugs my neck and shoulder;
My rifle and I from this day
Will be as one, united.

Few are we in number now,
Yet bold as many millions;
We blast away at hills and valleys,
Convoys, columns, bridges.
The fascist trembles in his boots,
He can't guess where we come from;
We charge at him from out of nowhere-
Jewish partisans!

The word "revenge" means something
When it's written down in blood;
For our dawning, sacred day
We'll fight on and on.
No, one thing we will never be
Is "Last of the Mohicans";
Bringing sunshine to the night-
The Jew, the partisan!



Music and film credits:

Felix Mendelssohn - Coro 'Wie der Hirsch schreit, - Psalm 42. La Chapelle Royale, Collegium Vocale, Ensemble
Gustav Mahler: Sinfonie Nr. 1 D-dur "Der Titan" Dirigent: Riccardo Chailly, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig

Gershon Sirota - Psalm 55. The Pearls of Cantorial Music

Alexander Zemlinsky, excerpt from Psalm 83. Complete choral works and orchestral songs. Gurzenich-Orchester
Kolner Philharmoniker. Chor des Stadt. Musikvereins zy Dusseldorf. James Conlon. EMI Classics

Franz Schreker, excerpt from Psalm 116. Kolner Rundfunkorchester Peter Gulke. Gert Westphal. WDR

Arnold Schoenberg, Six Little Piano Pieces, Op. 19, No. 6

Arnold Schoenberg, Moses und Aron. Act 1. Scene 1. The Appointment. Soloists, BBC Singers, Orpheus Boys'
Choir, BBC SO, P Boulez

Gideon Klein. String Trio, 1 Allegro. Forbidden Music. Klein, Krasa & Schulhoff. Hope, Dukas, Warkins. Nimbus
Records

Ervin Schulhoff, 'Hot Music' Excerpt from 10 Syncopated Etudes, WV 92. Kathryn Stott, piano. BIS.

Viktor Ullmann, The Emperor of Atlantis, Music from Terezin. Conducted by Robert DeCormier. Members of the
Vermont Symphony Orchestra. AR

Viktor Ullmann, Die Klaviersonaten. Konrad Richter, piano. Sonata No. 7, theme from Hebrew folk song. Bayer
Records.

Hans Krasa, Brundibar, Children's Opera in two acts. Disman Radio Children's Ensemble, Prague. Joza Karas.
Cannel Classics

Kurt Weill, Mackie Messer featured in the 1930 Berlin production the **Three Penny Opera** (Weill/Brecht)

Kurt Geron, excerpt from "The Führer gives the Jews a City"

Ilse Weber: Ich Wandre Durch Theresienstadt , Anne Sofie Von Otter, Bengt Forsberg, Bebe Risenfors

Karel Svenk, Terezin Hymn. Downtown Music Productions. Mimi Stern-Wolfe. Leonardo

Mordecai Gebirtag, Krakow Ghetto Notebook. Es Brent. Daniel Kempin. Koch International Classics.

Hirsh Glick, Zog Nit Keyn mol, Rise up and Flight! Songs of the Jewish Partisans. Theodore Bikel. United States
Holocaust Memorial Museum

Shmerke Kaczerginski, Yid, du Partisan. Rise up and Flight! Songs of the Jewish Partisans. Theodore Bikel.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

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