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Frank Schneider: Notate zu Musik und Musikern der DDR

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conformist thought, though within the framework of Marxism-Leninism. Peter Ludz discusses "Continuity and Change since Ulbricht." Throughout this book it is clear that the GDR is a changing, dynamic society, though not without its problems. A second recurrent theme of these essays is the search for self-identity and the establishment of the "legitimacy" of the GDR government among the populace. Henry Kirsch analyzes the efforts to redefine national allegiance by emphasizing the developing "socialist human community" rather than traditional "national categories," such as language. He points out that the communications media and educational system plus economic successes have increased popular identification with the system. However, he warns that economic setbacks could undermine popular support, while the 'Federal Republic...continues to be the 'other' by contrast with which the GDR's own identity is established." Arthur Hanhardt, Jr. also argues that various factors have combined to increase identification with the regime, thereby creating a greater sense of self-assurance and stability. One could, of course, quibble with some aspects of this book. The editor of such collections is faced with the harrowing tasks of delineating themes and integrating diverse essays. Thus, Professor Legters writes in his introduction that the various contributors believe in the "primacy of domestic politics." However, it does not appear that all the writers are infused with this belief (e.g. Hanhardt, 176). The essays by Ludz and Anita D. Mallinckrodt are quite dated, as the editor recognizes, but this recognition did not prevent their inclusion in the book. Professor Keren's article on the New Economic System puts formidable demands upon the non-economist, though the essay is clearly worth the extra efforts. The book is generally free of traditional Cold War rhetoric, although Hanhardt may surprise some readers with his ungrounded and seemingly offhand reference to the "mentality and the venality of the functionaries," a statement that corresponds neither to the tone of the book nor to the generally high quality of his essay. However, these are minor points compared with the virtues of the book. These essays will partially alleviate the relative paucity of works on the GDR written in English. Moreover, the bibliography which

includes only works in English, and especially the notes following the articles, which also list works in German, will lead the reader to a variety of specialized works and articles on the GDR as well as some primary sources.

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Momentaufnahme: Notate zu Musik und Musikern der DDR. By Frank Schneider. Leipzig: Philipp Reclam jun., 1979. 460 pages. 3,50 M.

Among the many acts of stock-taking prompted by the 30th anniversary of the GDR, Schneider's observations on New Music in that country is a feat of penetrating scholarship and aesthetic understanding deserving international readership.

Schneider concentrates upon production in instrumental music in the GDR during the past decade, a period in which New Music has come into its own both in terms of its role in the society of the Republic and of the serious international recognition which it has gained in West and East alike.

The book offers a collection of biographical and analytic studies--including exegeses of individual compositions; it is not intended as a work of music history, but rather as an assessment of the contemporary compositional scene, designed as a contribution to structuralist hermeneutics.

Schneider, who earns his daily bread as a Dramaturg at the East Berlin Komische Oper, is a man of radiant intellect and it is the filtering of data through his critically perceptive eye which gives this book its unique readability. He has organized his reflections according to the sonata principle--complete with exposition, development and recapitulation, giving the book something of that fascination with "verbal music" known from Thomas Mann's Doctor Faustus.

Composers treated are Reiner Bredemeyer, Paul-Heinz Dittrich, Freidrich Goldmann, Georg Katzer, Siegfried Matthus and Friedrich Schenker. Excursions evaluate the contributions made by Hanns Eisler and Ernst Hermann Meyer to the development

of music in the GDR. The only difficulty presented by the book is the lack of knowledge of--and access to--the products of these composers, only a modest amount of which exists on recordings even in their native land.

As a coda Schneider offers a brilliant essay on New Music between composers' interests and the needs of the audience. Here the author indicates that the gap between advanced art and popular reception is far from closed in the GDR; he stresses that the resolution of this dilemma lies far in the future, since this relationship is defined by factors not primarily musical.

Schneider's next major project is a book on Arnold Schoenberg, which will be significant as the first major Marxist study of Vienna's "conservative revolutionary."

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Die Schauspieltheater der DDR und das Erbe (1970-1974). By Manfred Nössig. Literatur und Gesellschaft. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1976. 262 pages. 8,-50 M.

"Erbe"--the heritage of works of art from the total Western tradition--is the most sacred cow which grazes upon the artistic meadows of the GDR. In his study of theatrical offerings within a four-year period, Nössig removes the halo and offers a sensitive and provocative study of this many-faceted program. Although the period under focus might seem of invalid brevity, the restriction is explained by the author in terms of the VIII. Party Congress of the SED in 1971, which made possible a less one-dimensional approach to this tradition than that permitted by doctrinaire Socialist Realism. Nössig locates the point of departure for the present age of experimentation somewhat earlier, however, pointing to the 1968 Faust at Berlin's Deutsches Theater, which followed closely upon hotly-debated productions of Goethe's classic in Leipzig and Weimar. His concern is further motivated by the declining role of "Erbe" dramas in the GDR theater (i.e. 30% of the total repertory in the years studied, compared to 51% in the 1960-61 season), which reflects, in turn, growing popularity

of lighter offerings. Consequently, a major problem facing GDR theater lies in attracting a modern audience to the idealistic and utopian concepts designed by past artistic generations. The body of the study is an anthology of critical reviews of dramatic productions, offering several--and often conflicting--appraisals of a single work or production. This permits Nössig to call his practice-oriented method "inductive". He restricts himself to works dating from antiquity down to the end of the second world war; the book opens with commentary upon Lorca's Doña Rosita, followed by discussions of Hamlet, Schiller's Räuber, and Faust, along with works by--among others--Ibsen, Gorki and Brecht.

Nössig possesses wide experience in all phases of theatrical life, including the editorship of Theater der Zeit during the years under discussion. This involvement gives his work a participatory impulse which accounts for its fascination. An extensive appendix, embracing a fifth of the book, offers--beyond customary annotation--a statistical table of "Erbe" works in the GDR repertory and a chronology and bibliography of the "Erbe"-debate during the years studied. Of particular interest is the fact that Nössig has not restricted himself to the formidable institutions of the GDR, but has gone into the boondocks of the republic as well. The book is of immense value to all who have had at best fragmentary experience of theatrical life in the GDR.

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Es begann im Eden: Erzählungen. By Karl Grünberg. Berlin: Tribüne Verlag, 1979. 337 pages. 9,-M.

This book, the fourth volume of selected works by Karl Grünberg, brings together four different but quite related stories written between 1932 and 1965, which focus on individual destinies during the tumultuous years of the Weimar Republic and the Hitler chaos. Grünberg's historical perspective provides a sympathetic insight