

1980

## Manfred Nössig: Die Schauspieltheater der DDR und das Erbe (1970-1974)

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### Recommended Citation

Blomster, Wes (1980) "Manfred Nössig: Die Schauspieltheater der DDR und das Erbe (1970-1974)," *GDR Bulletin*: Vol. 6: Iss. 2. <https://doi.org/10.4148/gdrb.v6i2.512>

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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