

## What if ... ?

### Thoughts on the Occasion of the 80th Anniversary of the 'Anschluss' – Walter Arlen as an Example

by Renate Publig

#### What if ...?

March 17, 1938. The 18-year-old Walter Arlen runs home with his matura certificate, looking forward to finally being allowed to begin his composition studies come fall.

March 18, 1938. One fell stroke ruins the plans and dreams of not just this young man: as a Jew he belonged to the wrong 'race,' Hitler's entry into Austria resulted in large-scale 'purges' that affected all who were not in possession of an 'Ariernachweis' ('certificate of Aryan descent'). And, 'I decide who is an Aryan,' decreed propaganda minister Goebbels.

Families were dispossessed, deported; some fled successfully. But even then, many of those who 'succeeded' had to endure that relatives died in the concentration camps.



The Ottakring department store Dichter, which belonged to Arlen's grandparents, 'changed' its proprietor. The checkout girl, who previously addressed Arlen's mother with 'Gnädige Frau,' now suddenly hurled all the invective current at the time at her.



Many friends of Arlen died in the camps, a history that the composer, who today lives in Los Angeles—and who shortly will celebrate his 98th birthday!—, shares with

many people. — At the end of this article we present a table with the affected Doblinger composers and librettists and their fate inflicted by the Nazi regime.



Apart from the human tragedies, from the countless disturbing stories, it is, furthermore, the scientific and artistic damage that was incurred at that time that remains irreversible. Austria was one of the most important centres of, among others, psychoanalysis, film, music, poetry and literature—the country was ravaged. Just the fact how many writings and manuscripts were irredeemably lost because they were victim to 'aryanization' measures or because their creators had to leave the country head over heels, packing their entire belongings into one or two suitcases, is shocking.



How would pieces sound if there never had been an 'Anschluss' and how would the history of composition have proceeded without this dramatic break? Of course, no one can answer these 'what if' questions. Some composers actually succeeded in having a great career as film composers in Hollywood. But how many of those thought of this success as 'lucky'? Yes, they escaped well and alive, and many composers continued in their musical creativity. But many were unable to get over the loss of friends and family, they were uprooted in their countries of exile which they remained unable to call 'home' with a full heart.



What if? We will never know. But it will be interesting to see if and how the works of these composers are capable to inspire the new generation of composers when these pieces are performed more



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#### Soundsample

#### „Song of Songs“: Nr. 2 - version for Voice and Piano

Christian Immler, Bariton  
Daniel Wnukowski, Piano  
<https://bit.ly/2ti8dEq>

#### Walter and Edith Arlen on 1938

<https://vimeo.com/109909765>

frequently in the concert halls. Not just as 'curiosities,' not just as a 'fulfillment of duty,' but when they regain the stature in musical life that was rightfully theirs from the outset.



Walter Arlen's touching oratorio 'Song of Songs', for example, was performed in October 2017 in Vienna's Musikverein—to great acclaim and in the presence of the visibly moved composer, who had specially made the journey from the USA. And who—also an interesting and touching sign of where he really feels at home—continues to speak perfect Viennese idiom. In May 2018, *exil.arte* honoured Walter Arlen with a concert evening at the mdw, dedicated to him.



### Doblinger composers as victims of the NS-Regime

Name	Prof.	Dates	What happened ...
Apostel, Hans Erich	E	1901 - 1992 (Wien, A)	„Degenerated music“
Arlen, Walter	E	1920 (Los Angeles, CA, USA)	Exile USA
Bachrich, Ernst	E	1892 - 1942 (KZ Majdanek)	Murdered (Concentration camp)
Beer, Joseph	U/E	1908 - 1987 (Nizza, F)	Exile F
Benatzky, Ralph	U	1887 - 1957 (Zürich, CH)	Exile CH/USA
Brammer, Julius	Librettist	1877 - 1943 (Juan-le-Pins, F)	Exile F
Eysler, Edmund	U	1874 - 1949 (Wien)	Hidden in A
Fall, Richard	U	1882 - 1945 (KZ Auschwitz)	Murdered (Concentration camp)
Farkacs, Karl	Librettist	1893 - 1971 (Wien)	Exile CZ/F/USA
Frank, Marco	U	1881 - 1961 (Wien)	Exile USA
Gál, Hans	E	1890 - 1987 (Edinburgh, GB)	Exile GB
Granichstaedten, Bruno	U	1879 - 1944 (New York, USA)	Exile USA
Grünbaum, Fritz	Librettist	1880 - 1941 (KZ Dachau)	Murdered (Concentration camp)
Grünwald, Alfred	Librettist	1884 - 1951 (New York, USA)	Exile F/MAR/P/USA
Herz, Peter	Librettist	1895 - 1987 (Wien)	Exile CH/F/GB
Ippisch, Franz	E	1883 - 1858 (Guatemala City)	Exile Guatemala (Ehefrau jüdisch)
Jokl, Otto	E	1891 - 1963 (New York, USA)	Exile USA
Jurmann, Walter	U	1903 - 1971 (Budapest, H)	Exile USA
Katscher, Robert	U	1894 - 1942 (Los Angeles, USA)	Exile USA
Kauder, Hugo	E	1888 - 1972 (Bussum, NL)	Exile USA
Kohn, Arthur	E	1890 - 1944 (KZ Auschwitz)	Murdered (Concentration camp)
Krenek, Ernst	E	1900 - 1991 (Palm Springs, USA)	Exile USA
Léon, Victor	Librettist	1858 - 1940 (Wien, A)	Occupational ban
Leopoldi, Hermann	U	1888 - 1959 (Wien, A)	KZ Dachau, KZ Buchenwald, Exil USA
Löhner-Beda, Fritz	Librettist	1883 - 1942 (KZ Auschwitz)	KZ Auschwitz
Märker, Leonhard	U	1911 - 1993 (NY, USA)	Exile F/USA
May, Hans	U	1886 - 1958 (London, GB)	Exile GB
Mittler, Franz	E	1893 - 1970 (Lohof/München, D)	Exile USA
Pahlen, Kurt	E	1907 - 2003 (Lenk, CH)	Exile Argentinien
Reiner, Karel	E	1910 - 1979 (Prag, CZ)	KZ Theresienstadt, Auschwitz, Dachau
Roger, Kurt	E	1895 - 1966 (Wien, A)	Exile GB/USA/IRL
Rosé, Alfred	E	1902 - 1975 (London/ ONT, CAN)	Exile USA/CAN
Rotter, Fritz	U	1900 - 1984 (Ascona, CH)	Exile GB/USA
Rubin, Marcel	E	1905 - 1995 (Wien, A)	Exile F/MEX
Schulhof, Otto	E	1889 - 1958 (Wien, A)	Ostracized
Silving, Bert	U	1887 - 1948 (New York, USA)	Exile USA
Spielmann, Fritz	U	1906 - 1997 (New York, USA)	Exile USA
Spoliansky, Mischa	U	1898 - 1985 (London, GB)	Exile GB
Stimmer, Karl Josef	E	1901 - 1943 (KZ Auschwitz)	Murdered (Concentration camp)
Stöhr, Richard	E	1874 - 1967 (Montpellier, USA)	Exile USA
Straus, Oscar	U	1870 - 1954 (Bad Ischl, A)	Exile USA
Urbancic, Viktor	E	1903 - 1958 (Reykjavik, Island)	Exile Island (Gattin jüdisch)
Weigel, Hans	Librettist	1908 - 1991 (Maria Enzersdorf, A)	Exile CH
Wellesz Egon	E	1885 - 1974 (Oxford, GB)	Exile GB
Wildgans, Friedrich	E	1913 - 1965 (Mödling, A)	Resistance => arrested
Wolfsohn, Julius	E	1880 - 1944 (New York, USA)	Exile USA
Zeisl, Erich	E	1905 - 1959 (Los Angeles, USA)	Exile USA
Zeisner, Hans	U	1911 - 1978 (Wien, A)	Exile / Musician on ships
Zemlinsky, Alexander	E	1871 - 1942 (Larchmont, USA)	Exile USA
Zipper, Herbert	E	1904 - 1997 (St. Monica, USA)	Exile USA