

Lernen aus der Geschichte e.V.

<http://www.lernen-aus-der-geschichte.de>

Der folgende Text ist auf dem Webportal

<http://www.lernen-aus-der-geschichte.de> veröffentlicht.

Das mehrsprachige Webportal publiziert fortlaufend Informationen zur historisch-politischen Bildung in Schulen, Gedenkstätten und anderen Einrichtungen zur Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Schwerpunkte bilden der Nationalsozialismus, der Zweite Weltkrieg sowie die Folgegeschichte in den Ländern Europas bis zu den politischen Umbrüchen 1989.

Dabei nimmt es Bildungsangebote in den Fokus, die einen Gegenwartsbezug der Geschichte herausstellen und bietet einen Erfahrungsaustausch über historisch-politische Bildung in Europa an.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Production: Schwerin Conservatory J.W. Hertel Music School

Participants: Students from the conservatory, ages 7-45

Participating subject areas: Choral department with children's choir, orchestra, "Music with Disabled" project

Title: "Brundibár" An opera with children and adults for children and adults, by Hans Krása
Musical Conductor: István Menich-Horváth Production: Christoph Stephan

Short description: The opera "Brundibár" was written in 1938 in Prague as a team effort of the librettist, Adolf Hoffmeister, and the composer, Hans Krása. The opera's premiere was held secretly in a Jewish orphanage in the autumn of 1942. The composer wasn't able to attend the premiere. He had been deported, as were many of the children who later took part in performances in the Theresienstadt ghetto. The decision to rehearse "Brundibár" again was made quickly. In all, there were 55 performances of a new version of the opera in Theresienstadt. However, only a few of the participating children survived the Nazi era. Most of them were murdered, as was the composer in 1944 in Auschwitz.

The action: The opera tells the story of Aninka and Pepicek, whose mother is very ill. The doctor prescribes milk, but the children do not have the money to buy it. They meet the organ-grinder Brundibár, who plays music at the street corner. The children start to sing, thinking that they, too, can earn some money. Brundibár chases the children away, but three animals — a dog, a cat and a sparrow — come to help. Together with the neighborhood children, Aninka and Pepicek sing a lullaby. People give them money, but Brundibár steals it. The children and the animals chase him and get the money back. The opera finishes with a song that celebrates victory over the bad organ-grinder.

Participants: Approximately 90 children, young persons and adults took part in the conservatory's production of "Brundibár." As an integrating measure, also included were two pupils of the project "Music with Disabled" with the support of the association *Zukunftswerkstatt* [Workshop of the Future].

Special Information: Mounting the production of "Brundibár" enabled all participants to identify and discuss societal problems, many of which are still topical today even 50 years after the war. In order to ensure a careful approach to the opera's subject matter and not leave out its tragic aspects, performances were accompanied by a side exhibition entitled "Theresienstadt - Music, That Was Life," sponsored by the local historical museum. As well, a discussion with the theme "Musical and Cultural Life in Theresienstadt" took part between the contemporary witness and former detainee Karel Vrba and 200 children from schools in Schwerin. The duration of the opera is 35 minutes. The performances in Schwerin were somewhat longer because of their unique production.

Performances: Premiere: Further performances: Guest performance, Odense/Denmark: Making music for UNICEF:

August 10, 1996, 4 p.m. August 10, 6 p.m. August 11, 4 and 6 p.m. August 25, 3 and 5 p.m. September 29, 11 a.m. in the State Theatre Schwerin

Planned: January 27, 1997 on the occasion of the Holocaust-Remembrance Day in Schwerin
Travel to Israel in February

Sponsors: North-German-Radio (NDR), supporting circle of the Schwerin Conservatory, *Sparkasse* [savings bank] Schwerin, Mecklenburg State Theatre in Schwerin, the company Steffen Neumann in Schwerin, Historical Museum in Schwerin, the Schelf School in Schwerin, Ghetto Museum in Terezín, Czech Centre in Berlin, parents and friends of the conservatory.

Documentation: Available are: a voluminous program, a press release and a 3.5-minute video from the regional television station N3 .

Contacts:

Konservatorium Schwerin **Headmaster:** Volker Ahmels Musikschule "Johann Wilhelm **Deputy:** Christina Lüdicke Hertel" Puschkinstr. 6 **Telephone:** +49 (0) 385 / 56 29 29 19055 Schwerin **Telefax:** +49 (0) 385 / 550 75 25