



Die Stadt ohne Juden: A Dystopian Prophecy of Intolerance

Thursday 15 November 2018 7pm & 9.30pm,
Milton Court Concert Hall

The City without Jews *silent film screening with
new live score by Olga Neuwirth*

A newly reconstructed and digitally restored film by
the Filmarchiv Austria

Olga Neuwirth composer
PHACE
Nacho de Paz conductor
HK Breslauer director

Commissioned by Barbican Centre, Wiener
Konzerthaus, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Ensemble
Intercontemporain, Sinfonieorchester Basel and
ZDF/ARTE

5.45pm: Pre-concert talk

Composer Olga Neuwirth in conversation with
BFI silent film curator Bryony Dixon

Part of Barbican Presents 2018–19 Part of the UK Jewish Film Festival

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Please turn off watch alarms, phones, pagers etc during the performance. Taking photographs, capturing images or using recording devices during a performance is strictly prohibited.

Please remember that to use our induction loop you should switch your hearing aid to T setting on entering the hall. If your hearing aid is not correctly set to T it may cause high-pitched feedback which can spoil the enjoyment of your fellow audience members.

If anything limits your enjoyment please let us know during your visit. Additional feedback can be given online, as well as via feedback forms or the pods located around the foyers.

Welcome

A warm welcome to this evening's screening of the extraordinary silent film *Die Stadt ohne Juden* ('The City without Jews') made by the great Austrian director H K Breslauer in 1924.

Though the film is nearly a century old, the topics it explores – intolerance, small-mindedness and the dangers of a mob mentality – remain as pertinent today as they ever were. And though Breslauer's film dealt specifically with the subject of anti-Semitism in an imaginary city named Utopia (which is clearly Vienna), again, it offers a universal message that we ignore at our peril.

The film was lost during the Second World War and was only rediscovered in Paris as recently as 2015; it has been painstakingly restored by the Austrian Film Archive.

Tonight it is presented with a new soundtrack by Olga Neuwirth, a composer who has long been fascinated by the art of film. To perform her score, we are delighted to welcome PHACE conducted by Nacho de Paz.

It promises to be a thought-provoking experience.

Huw Humphreys, Head of Music, Barbican

The Art of Change



Die Stadt ohne Juden is part of the Barbican's 2018 season The Art of Change, which explores how artists respond to, reflect, and can potentially effect change in the social and political landscape.

The Barbican Centre's programme across Theatre, Music, Art Gallery, Cinema and Creative Learning presents bold artistic responses to vital global issues, including feminism, climate change and human rights, while providing a platform for voices that are currently under-represented in the arts.

Highlights have included Jazz at Lincoln Center recreating Benny Goodman's ground-breaking 1938 Carnegie Hall gig, the first interracial concert at the iconic New York venue; Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*; *Another Kind of Life*, an exhibition presenting photography from countercultures, subcultures and minorities of all kinds from the 1950s to the present day; and *Nevertheless, She Persisted*, a season of films highlighting women's rebellious and often dangerous efforts to gain equality in the century since the 1918 Representation of the People Act.

For an overview of our full The Art of Change season, visit barbican.org.uk/theartofchange

A race against time

In 1924 Adolf Hitler was imprisoned in the Landsberg Fortress in the south-west of Bavaria for his leading role in an attempted coup against the Weimar Republic. He used his time in jail to write *Mein Kampf*, in which he effectively set out the political programme for National Socialism. At the dark centre of Hitler's world view lay a deep-rooted anti-Semitism that in less than two decades would lead to the Holocaust.

In the same year, in Vienna – the city where Hitler had learnt his anti-Semitism – the Austrian director Hans Karl Breslauer was shooting a film that uncannily prefigured the events associated with the Holocaust. In Breslauer's movie a city, ironically named Utopia but unmistakably Vienna, is under the sway of an opportunistic demagogue and expels its entire Jewish population. The wealthy escape – the hero to Paris – but others are crammed onto trains with suitcases and baskets and the clothes they are wearing, just as within two decades Europe's Jews would be transported by the SS to the death camps. Others in the film are forcibly marched out of the country in a way that reminds you of the Nazis marching the survivors of the death camps to the West as the Red Army advanced into Poland in 1944, the 'Death Marches'. And, in a particularly nasty sequence the demagogue defines Jewishness in ways that prefigure the Nazis' notorious Nuremberg Race Laws of 1935.

Breslauer's silent film *Die Stadt ohne Juden* ('The City without Jews') may have a happy ending with the Jews welcomed back to Utopia when its citizens come to realise how important the community is to everyone's financial well-being, but its prescience about the fate of European Jewry in the middle of the 20th century is uncanny and deeply uncomfortable to watch.

The film began life as a successful popular novel by Hugo Bettauer, who was born Jewish in 1872 but, hoping for a career in the Austrian Imperial army, converted to Christianity and joined the Evangelical Church. Bettauer's army career was as short-lived as most of his professional ventures and after marriage, a journey to America and the loss of a substantial inheritance he joined the profession of last resort and became a journalist

in Berlin. What with journalism in Prussia, cabaret in Munich, a divorce and a second visit to the USA, Bettauer's career was exactly what a *mitteleuropäisch* portfolio career looked like in the early 20th century.

Eventually he returned to Vienna, only to quarrel in 1918 with his employers at the *Neue Freie Presse* over a typewriter. Thereafter he freelanced for American newspapers and two years later began to write crime fiction, in enormous quantities, too, publishing as many as five novels a year. What seems to have appealed to Hugo Bettauer's readers were his exotic locations – Berlin, Vienna and New York – but Dr Nikolaus Wostry, Deputy Director of the Austrian Film Archive, argues that there was often a strong social message embedded in Bettauer's writing. 'He tried to adopt a more tolerant position about a range of social issues in his work. He was trying to make society more tolerant about, say, unmarried mothers and homosexuals, so papers and magazines and conservatives singled him out as someone who was leading youth astray and as a destroyer of morals. It was perhaps inevitable that he came to focus on the anti-Semitic tendencies that emerged during the First Austrian Republic.'

There had been Jewish communities in Austria since the 12th century. And there, as elsewhere in Europe, Jews had been persecuted and excluded from society. During the Enlightenment Empress Maria Theresa and her son Joseph had, despite their own personal feelings about the Jews, attempted to incorporate them into Austrian civil society. In a city such as Vienna this process accelerated during and after the French Revolution at a time when many Jews were arguing the case for assimilation into Austrian public life. These aspirations were encouraged by the ideals of the 1848 revolutions and Emperor Franz Joseph's political response to this challenge to imperial autocracy. The new 1867 constitution permitted Jews an unrestricted right to reside and to practise their religion throughout Austria. In Vienna itself the Jewish population began to grow, from just over 2,500 in 1857 to nearly 150,000 in 1900 when Jews made up over eight per cent of the city's population.

The lower and middle classes tended to live in two particular districts of the city, Leopoldstadt and Alsergrund, while wealthier members of the community chose to live in the city centre or in the leafy suburbs of Döbling and Hietzing. Cultural assimilation brought enormous rewards to the city's life – just think of Sigmund Freud, Gustav Mahler, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Arthur Schnitzler, Joseph Roth, Arnold Schoenberg, Stefan Zweig and so on.

The Emperor may have chosen to afford his Jewish citizens respect as well as rights, but some of his Viennese politicians were deeply anti-Semitic and used such feelings within the general population to buttress their political ambitions. There's an argument that it was the extension of the franchise that lay behind the rise in anti-Semitism in Vienna in the 1880s, that the artisans and shopkeepers who were now able to vote in city elections were single-minded Catholic nationalists and easily encouraged to look for scapegoats when the economy faltered and unemployment knocked on so many doors. Just as happens in the film *The City without Jews*, it had to be someone's fault that things had gone wrong. Of course it was the Jews, aliens in our midst and the inventors of capitalism.

Five times Karl Lueger was elected Mayor of Vienna on a platform that intended to unite all Christians and all nationalities of the monarchy against a common Jewish enemy and four times the Emperor refused to ratify his appointment. It was only the intervention of the Pope in 1897 that got him into office. 'I decide who is a Jew', proclaimed Lueger and, as Bruce Pauley argues in his study of Austrian anti-Semitism, 'Lueger's old-fashioned brand of religious, cultural, and economic anti-Semitism remained for half a century the integrating force of political Catholicism because it was ... in accord with Viennese traditions.' And it reached out to the next generation too. Adolf Hitler freely acknowledged that that it was Karl Lueger who had confirmed his own attitude towards the Jews.

While Hitler was serving as a lance corporal in the Bavarian Army at the beginning of the Great War, Russia invaded the Austrian provinces to the East including Galicia, causing a stream of refugees to descend on Vienna. Among them were between 50,000 and 70,000 Jews, depending on your sources. They were completely different from the assimilated Jews who lived in the city – they spoke Yiddish and held faith with traditional religious and social

practices. If these *Ostjuden* were perceived as a threat by Catholic Nationalist Vienna, they weren't much to the taste of the city's traditional Jewish community either. They had no money and work was hard to come by. As we see in *The City without Jews* many tried to scrape together a living by working as street salesmen or peddlers.

In time the majority of the Jewish refugees returned to their homes in the East. Nikolaus Wostry explains: 'By the end of the First World War there were only 20,000 left. But the Republic used their presence as a pretext for their anti-Semitic policies.' The political and economic crisis that attended the birth of the new Republic brought rallies, marches and often violent demonstrations on the streets (there are plenty of street politics in *The City without Jews*). Jewish refugees from the East were blamed for housing shortages and it was said that Jews had avoided fighting in the war. As one historian reminds us, 'an international anti-Semitic congress with participants from Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary organised to by the Austrian Antisemitenbund was attended by about 40,000 people'. University classes taught by Jewish professors were interrupted and Leopoldstadt was leafleted with virulent anti-Semitic propaganda.

As Wostry says: 'This is the field that Bettauer's novel is located in'. And the movie too. Not a great deal is known about the background to the production. It seems likely that it was financed by what we would now describe as crowd funding. Thanks to the Austrian Film Archive's research we know more about the director Hans Karl Breslauer. 'He was already an experienced director. He started with Sasha Films – a celebrated Austrian company which had in a way a monopoly of propaganda films during the First World War. It is very interesting that later, in 1940–41, Breslauer joined the Nazi Party. It seems that he was an opportunist because in the 1920s he made all of his projects with the scriptwriter Ida Jenbach, who was Jewish. She wrote all of his scripts and she herself was a victim of the Holocaust. She was killed in Minsk by the Nazis.'

Jenbach and Breslauer changed the original novel, adding remarkable scenes of Jewish life in Vienna, including a service in a city synagogue; they also play up the happy ending in which it's effectively a Jew who saves the day – and gets the girl! For the historian it is perhaps these scenes of Jewish life, quite as much as the

Expressionist nightmare endured by the city's principal anti-Semite when he is incarcerated in an asylum, that are so valuable. After the Anschluss in 1938, German and Austrian Nazis destroyed synagogues and other Jewish institutions with the intention of obliterating any evidence of Vienna's Jewish heritage.

According to Wostry, *The City without Jews* opened in all six of Vienna's most prestigious cinemas, 'including the largest screen in the city, the Prater amusement park. The film ran quite well but we know that some were angered by it, and there were audiences who were hampered from seeing it. There were clashes in the area of Wiener-Neustadt while in Upper Austria, one of the Republic's nine provinces, which was also the home province of Adolf Hitler and where they were known as being particularly anti-Semitic, they forbade the screening of the film to keep the peace. And when it was shown in Germany it aroused anger and caused disturbances.'

And was there an especially commissioned score for this silent movie? 'We don't know. In the leading theatres there would be a pot-pourri of well-known pieces arranged for the film in question, usually played by an orchestra. But it was rare in Austria that a new score could be afforded.'

This evening *The City without Jews* will have its own specially commissioned score. When she started out, Olga Neuwirth couldn't quite decide whether she wanted to be a filmmaker or a composer. 'I learnt a lot about using music not only through soundtracks by Hanns Eisler but also in the films of Pier Paolo Pasolini; I was very intrigued by what they did and how they used music to underlay the content. When I started composing for my first film, I analysed the film frame by frame, millisecond by millisecond, to learn how it was structured. For me it's important not to fall simply into representation, but to represent something.

'That's the game I like to play with: sometimes I call it "an ironic distance" from the content. But on the other hand I do want to be emotionally in the content. I play with clichés and stereotypes – this is something that I do in *Die Stadt*, in relation to the different types of characters, all the while avoiding turning them into caricatures. For example, I play around with motifs based on Austrian yodellers, sometimes distorting them on the samples, sometimes making them really short for the live musicians themselves to perform.

'My music has to relate to my own sound world. And that sound world is something between a "musical rage" – which relates to how far the human being can go in terms of hatred – and a "musical distance", featuring distorted musical stereotypes.' It would seem to be a dialogue between this 'musical rage' and satire that grows out of this composer's use of musical cliché.

The resulting irony, not to mention the anger, would certainly have appealed to Hugo Bettauer. After its Austrian and German screenings the film all but disappeared. Wostry and the Austrian Film Archive have patiently reconstructed the movie with material that was found in Holland and Paris but they still can't be certain that what we see tonight is the same film that Vienna watched nearly a century ago.

In the process Wostry and his team have also tried to untangle the later history of this remarkable film. 'It became clear that you couldn't distribute the movie because it caused public disturbances with people being attacked when they tried to go to the cinema to see it. Neither the material from Amsterdam or Paris came from prints that were made for the first distribution. They were sometimes distributed much later. So we know that the print which we found in Amsterdam had been screened there in 1933 as a demonstration against Hitler coming to power in Germany. The French material is from the late 1920s but the editing is from the early 1930s, so it seems that the film followed in the wake of the rise of German Fascism in Europe in the 1930s and after the world economic crisis.'

That was something that the writer Hugo Bettauer never saw. The Nazis described him as a 'Red poet' and a 'corruptor of youth'. One member of the Austrian party demanded that members should undertake 'radical self help' and administer 'lynch justice against all polluters of our people'. And on 10 March 1925 Otto Rothstock, a dental technician who it appears had been a member of the party, took him at his word. He entered Bettauer's office and shot him several times with a handgun. The writer was taken to hospital and died from his wounds 16 days later. The court dealt leniently with Rothstock: he was committed to an asylum and freed 18 months later. Within eight years Hitler had seized power in Germany and the nightmare that Hugo Bettauer had somehow second-guessed began.

Programme note © Christopher Cook

About the composer



Harald Hoffmann

Olga Neuwirth

Olga Neuwirth composer

Olga Neuwirth was born in Graz in 1968. She studied at the Vienna Academy of Music and San Francisco Conservatory of Music. During her time in the USA she also attended art college, studying painting and film. Her private teachers in composition included Adriana Hölszky, Tristan Murail and Luigi Nono. She first came to international attention in 1991, when two of her mini-operas were performed at the Vienna Festival.

In 1998 she was featured in two 'New Generation' concerts at the Salzburg Festival. The following year, her music-theatre work *Bählamms Fest* was premiered at the Vienna Festival and won the Ernst Krenek prize. A year later, she wrote *Clinamen/Nodus* for Pierre Boulez and the London Symphony Orchestra. In 2002 she was appointed Composer-in-Residence at the Lucerne Festival.

With Nobel Prize-winning novelist Elfriede Jelinek she has created two radio plays and three operas. Her opera *Lost Highway*, based on the film by David Lynch, was premiered in 2003 and won a *South Bank Show* Award for the production presented by English National Opera in 2008.

Since she was a teenager, she has also been interested in film, literature, architecture and the visual arts. Aside from composing, she also realises sound installations, art exhibitions and short films and has written several articles and a book.

Her works are multi-layered and multi-sensory. Some pieces also draw on the full range of effects of both electronic and orchestral instruments, as well as video, which she began using in the late 1980s. Her music is characterised by an immediacy, which is often dramatic and expressive: she is particularly interested in emotions and how they relate to the brain and memory.

Much of her music has been recorded by the Kairos label.

In 2008 she was awarded the Heidelberg Artist Prize. Two years later she became the first-ever woman to receive the Grand Austrian State Prize for music, as well as the Louis Spohr Prize from the City of Brunswick.

In 2012, while living in New York City, she completed two new operas: *The Outcast* – a homage to Hermann Melville – and *American Lulu*, a version of Alban Berg's *Lulu*. In 2015 she completed a film score for a silent film and a feature film by Veronika Franz and Severin Fiala, and the orchestral work *Masaot/Clocks without hands* for the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

Her *Eleanor Suite* was premiered at the Salzburg Festival in August 2015. Her 80-minute piece *Le Encantadas*, based on the acoustics of a Venetian church, received its premiere at Donaueschingen and at the Festival d'Automne à Paris. She composed her percussion concerto *Trurljade-Zone Zero* for the 2016 Lucerne Festival, where she was Composer-in-Residence for the second time.

In March last year her 3D sound installation in collaboration with IRCAM was inaugurated at the Centre Pompidou in Paris for its 40th anniversary. The same year she collaborated with architect Peter Zumthor and Asymptote Architects.

This year she celebrates her 50th birthday with several concerts and new productions of *Lost Highway* and *The Outcast*. Her new opera *Orlando* will be premiered at the Vienna State Opera in 2019.

About the performers



Pablo Albacete

Nacho de Paz

Nacho de Paz conductor

Conductor Nacho de Paz was born in Oviedo in 1974 and is especially renowned in 20th- and 21st-century music. He initially trained as a pianist, studying with Natalia Mazoun, Ilya Goldfarb and Tsiola Kvernadze) and has master's degrees in piano from the Asturias Conservatory and composition from the Barcelona Conservatory. He studied for his doctorate in art history and musicology at the universities of Barcelona and Madrid.

His composition prizes include the Joan Guinjoan Prize for Young Composers (2002) and the Luigi Russolo Prize for electro-acoustic composition (2003). He then specialised in orchestral conducting and subsequently worked with Ensemble Modern. He also undertook a master's in contemporary music at Frankfurt University in 2006.

He has conducted more than 300 world premieres, as well as giving the first performances in Spain of such key works as Nono's *Prometeo* and Stockhausen's *Gruppen*.

Ensembles he has conducted include the Spanish National Orchestra and Chorus, the Barcelona, Basque, Bilbao and Madrid Symphony orchestras, the Netherlands Radio Symphony Orchestra, National Spanish Youth Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica de Castilla y León, the Galicia, Luxembourg and Oviedo Philharmonic orchestras, the Orchestra of the Teatro Nacional de São Carlos in Lisbon,

Ensemble Modern, Ensemble musikFabrik, Klangforum Wien, Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart, PHACE and the choir Accentus, among others.

He has recorded widely for a number of labels as well as for television and radio channels.

Recent and forthcoming projects include collaborations with the Teatro Real, Teatro de la Zarzuela, Wiener Konzerthaus, Real Orquesta Sinfónica de Sevilla, Orquesta Sinfónica de Bilbao, Aspekte Festival, Salzburg, Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie, the Luxembourg Philharmonie and in the Sampler Series in Barcelona.

PHACE

PHACE has a focus on performing the music of today, regardless of genre, with passion, fire and excitement. Its aim is to take music out of its ivory tower and embed it within the multi-faceted world of contemporary culture. The 10 soloists of PHACE and their Artistic Director Reinhard Fuchs aim to take audiences on journeys into rich, poetic worlds.

For many years, PHACE has presented unconventional concerts, musical theatre productions and undertaken interdisciplinary projects with dance, theatre, live performance, electronics, video, turntables, installations and much more. Since its founding in 1991 by conductor and composer Simeon Pironkoff as 'ensemble on_line' and relaunching in 2010 under the name PHACE, the group has sought out artistic collaborations with numerous renowned composers, conductors and musicians. In this way more than 200 works have been commissioned and premiered, and many of those have been released on commercial recordings. Openness and curiosity to experiment at the highest artistic level are the hallmarks of the ensemble, and these are regularly furthered through collaborations with other musicians and guests from a variety of artistic disciplines.

In autumn 2012 PHACE found its artistic home with its own subscription series at the Wiener Konzerthaus, and performs 25–30 concerts a

year as a guest ensemble at leading international halls and festivals. These include the Avignon Festival, L'auditori Barcelona, Barbican Centre, BBVA Bilbao, Berlin Festival, Bludenz Days of Contemporary Music, Brucknerhaus Linz, Carinthian Summer Music Festival, Contempuls Festival, Prague, Paris Autumn Festival, deSingel, Ensembles Festival Valencia, Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Tyrolean Festival for New Music, Kings Place, London, March Music Days in Ruse, Music Olomouc, Musica Strasbourg, Mixtur Barcelona, Krems Easter Festival, Tirol Easter Festival, Philharmonie Luxembourg, Rainy Days Luxembourg, Salzburger Festspiele, Salihara Arts Festival, Indonesia, Sampler Series Barcelona, SonEMUS Festival Sarajevo, Municipal Theatre of Amsterdam, Thaliatheater Hamburg, Transart Festival, Bozen, Festival for New Music, Berlin, Wien Modern, Wiener Festwochen and the Wiener Konzerthaus.

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BUNDESKANZLERAMT  ÖSTERREICH

PHACE

Artistic Director

Reinhard Fuchs

Clarinet

Walter Seebacher

Keyboard

Mathilde Hoursiangou

Cello

Roland Schueler

Saxophone

Michael Krenn

Percussion

Berndt Thurner

Sound

Alfred Reiter

Trumpet

Spiros Laskaridis

Electric Guitar

Felix Pöchhacker

The list of musicians was correct at the time of going to press

Trombone

Stefan Obmann

Viola

Petra Ackermann