

WAR NOISES IN BRITISH MUSIC

15 July

JEREMY DIBBLE (DURHAM)

War, Impression, Sound and Memory. British Music and the First World War

The First World War occurred at a critical juncture in Britain's musical history. It led to mass casualties among younger talent, whose cohort had been enjoying a new, more highly respected status as composers and performers, and further marginalized the declining influence of the Victorian pedagogues. The war's end helped define a musical aftermath of cathartic memory from which the country's musical institutions had to rebuild. Against this backdrop, British composers not only adopted a new cultural nationalism, but also attempted, in different ways, to represent the sights and sounds of the war in their works. The lecture will analyse how the guns of the Somme, the evocations of the dreadnought battleships, the spectre of mechanized warfare and the sounds of military signals were incorporated into British music of the time.

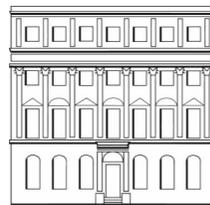
Jeremy Dibble is Professor of Music at the University of Durham. His research covers a wide range of topics including historiography, Irish music, opera and church music in Britain during the Victorian, Edwardian and Georgian eras. His recent book publications include *John Stainer: A Life in Music* (2007); *Michele Esposito* (2010); and *Hamilton Harty: Musical Polymath* (2013).



Seminars are held at 5.30 p.m. in the Seminar Room of the German Historical Institute, 17 Bloomsbury Square, WC1A 2NJ London

Tea is available from 5.00 p.m. in the Common Room, and wine is served after the seminars

Please check for any last minute changes on 020 7309 2050 (tel.) or visit: <http://www.ghil.ac.uk>



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**FIRST WORLD WAR NOISES
LISTENING TO THE GREAT WAR**

SEMINAR SERIES | SUMMER TERM 2014

FIRST WORLD WAR NOISES LISTENING TO THE GREAT WAR

In Monty Python's famous record shop, *First World War Noises* was not among the "terrifically popular" items. While other records were selling fast, the soundtrack of the Great War got stuck. In modern historiography, too, the acoustics of history were left on the shelf for

a long time – historians have only just begun to discover the significance of sound as a field of research.

Inspired by this new strand of scholarship, the German Historical Institute London will mark this year's centenary with a series of lectures that revolve around the auditory dimensions of the First World War. In order to highlight the experience and the impact of sound in history from various angles, the lecture series will take a broad approach, including perspectives from military history, media history, the history of music and the history of collective memory.

The lectures will explore what the acoustics of the Great War meant for the soldiers on the battlefield and how they influenced public remembrance, popular media and the arts. The lecture series will thus probe the place of sound both in contemporary experience and the aftermath of the war.

WAR NOISES IN THE MEDIA

27 May

MARK CONNELLY (CANTERBURY)

War Noises in Silent Films. First World War Battle Reconstructions in British Instructional Films, 1921-1931

British Instructional Films made a series of battle reconstructions with the aid of the War Office and Admiralty that proved smash hits across the Empire. Now almost entirely unknown, these films attempted to show the people of the Empire exactly what their soldiers and sailors had done on their behalf. Using hundreds of troops and ships lent by the army and navy, BIF was able to create epics which thrilled people whilst also making them consider the

cost of the war. Of course, these films were never 'silent' – sound effects and music were added to enhance as well as shape the viewing experience. In addition, the frequent use of soldiers' songs in the musical accompaniment encouraged the audiences to sing along, turning a screening into a community experience resurrecting memories and emotions. The lecture will explore what these films reveal about how people across the British Empire understood the war in its immediate aftermath.

Mark Connelly is Professor of Modern British History at the University of Kent. His main research interests are on the memory of war, the image of the armed forces in popular culture and aspects of operational military history. His publications include *The Great War: Memory and Ritual* (2002); *We Can Take It: Britain and the Memory of the Second World War* (2004) and *Steady the Buffs! A Regiment, a Region and the Great War* (2005).

WAR NOISES ON THE BATTLEFIELD

10 June

JULIA ENCKE (BERLIN)

The Beleaguered Ear. On Fighting Underground and Learning to Listen in the Great War

On the frontlines of the First World War the noise of battle, rattling machine guns, cannonading artillery and bursting shells laid siege to the ear. Soldiers had to learn how to discriminate between these various war noises in order to anticipate looming danger and increase their chances of survival. Technical devices and tactics were designed to detect the sounds of war: listening posts were employed, telephone systems and microphone equipment were installed, sound locators were invented and geophones adapted to the mine war. Unlike the eye that could be closed, however, the ear was always open and constantly in touch with the fighting. Perceiving and identifying war noises became a top priority in the trenches. The lecture will explore the sound of war from the perspective of the soldiers on the battlefields.

Julia Encke is editor of the feuilleton in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung and from 2001 to 2005 was editor of the feuilleton in the Süddeutsche Zeitung. After studying literature in Freiburg, Toulouse and Munich, her doctoral research was on the sensory perception of the First World War. Her publications include *Augenblicke der Gefahr. Der Krieg und die Sinne, 1914-1934* (2006) and *Charisma und Politik – Warum unsere Demokratie mehr Leidenschaft braucht* (2014).

WAR NOISES IN GERMAN MUSIC

24 June

STEFAN HANHEIDE (OSNABRÜCK)

Reflections of War Sounds in German Concert Halls

Shortly after the outbreak of the First World War, composers in the belligerent countries began to comment on the hostilities in their works. A variety of war noises and their musical representation served as semantic symbols to express their views on the war. They did not rely primarily on the sounds of the battlefield, however, but mostly on other war-related acoustic signals, like anthems, patriotic chorales, military music and marching songs. As the war progressed, more and more tones of sorrow, grievance and denunciation entered the music. After 1918, sarcastically distorted military music and noises from military life were used to express criticism of the unprecedented carnage. The lecture will investigate the aims underlying the German composers' treatment of the sounds of war in their work. It will analyse techniques applied and discuss why the sounds of the battlefield were incorporated only to a limited degree.

Stefan Hanheide is Professor of Music History at the University of Osnabrück. His current research focuses on music in the context of political violence from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. His recent publications include *Music Positions its Forces – Functionalizations of Music during the First World War* (2013); and *Pace. Musik zwischen Krieg und Frieden. 40 Werkporträts* (2007).