

**Cultures of Music:
Harmony and Discord**
German 322

Spring 2021
T/Th 10-11:20

Prof. Ellwood Wiggins
VLPA

“Where words leave off, music begins.” –Heinrich Heine

“Without music, life would be a mistake.” –Friedrich Nietzsche

Music is often claimed to be a **universal language**. It transcends cultural and national boundaries like no other discourse or artform and forges bonds of community between disparate people. Even in times of quarantine, music has provided a way for people to connect—whether singing together from apartment balconies, or coordinating zoom performances across continents. But music always emerges from a **particular culture** and has often been used to create exclusive groups and incite hatred as well as love. In this course, we will explore the history of musical experience in Germany as an introduction to cultural studies. We will listen to Bach and Turkish-German Rappers, watch films about Mozart and Cabaret, and read influential texts in music theory and ethnomusicology. We’ll learn about identity and hybridity, high and low culture, transcendent and ‘degenerate’ art. Music is a powerful emotional force that both unites and divides people, giving voice to the most beautiful and disturbing aspects of human culture.

Class meetings remote and synchronous.



*Every
Note*

Isolde's Liebestod.

Mild und leise wie er lächelt.

Mort d'Iseult.

Doux et calme comme il sourit.

Isolde's Love-death.

Light and softly, how he smiles.

Molto moderato cominciare.

Richard Wagner.

