

## *Musica/Cultura/Sociologia*

The ongoing lecture series *Musica/Cultura/...* is dedicated to the examination of music from a cultural perspective, with a focus on interdisciplinary and methodological issues. Each year, the series explores connections with a different related field. Following the inaugural series *Musica/Cultura/Storia*, the second cycle in 2025 will examine the connections between musicology and cultural studies, sociology, and social history.

These connections have a long tradition: in Germany, where musicology was established early on as an academic discipline due to the importance of music in the German educational canon, the sociology of music played a central role almost from the beginning, as reflected by research in music psychology and ethnomusicology. Max Weber, who drew on the ethnomusicological research of Carl Helmholtz, and Friedrich Carl Stumpf's perceptual-psychological studies, combined historical and music-theoretical models—from Pythagoras and Jean-Philippe Rameau, to Johann Sebastian and Johann Christian Bach—by interpreting them sociologically within their respective cultural and temporal contexts. In contrast, Theodor W. Adorno, in his *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, argued from an aesthetic standpoint, interpreting trends in both popular music and the contemporary avant-garde in a culturally critical manner. In French sociology, Pierre Bourdieu's research on the *habitus* and the social aspects of art reception and cultural capital took an empirical approach, thereby offering an alternative interpretation of cultural criticism. In the UK, the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies established a method that used popular cultural products as the basis for sociological analyses, dropping the critical stance toward the audience that characterized much of the work of the Frankfurt School. Instead, it primarily focused on the social circumstances surrounding cultural activity, an approach that reflected a different political framework.

Current work in the field of cultural sociology combines these diverse approaches, drawing on both the theorems of critical theory and the artefacts of popular culture as the basis for research. In addition, this work poses new questions, such as those concerned with emotional, sociological, or historical issues. While initially, with this broader spectrum of research, there were calls to abolish the distinction between highbrow and lowbrow music altogether, interest has increasingly shifted from the evaluation of artistic objects to the study of everyday cultural practices. Consequently, those disciplines concerned with historical research began to recognize the potential of music to shed light on socio-historical questions. This shift toward viewing music as an object of socio-cultural research was approached rather hesitantly by German musicology. Italian music scholars, however, showed an early and decisive interest in exploring these explicitly political questions.

The Musica/Cultural/Sociologia series, therefore, will comprise lectures by researchers from a variety of disciplines who approach music as a socio-historical phenomenon, while also examining how this perspective is expressed in different national traditions of music sociology. In addition to the lecture series, the specialist group on the sociology and social history of music of the German Musicological Society will meet at the DHI in Rome in October 2025.

Concept: Vera Grund and Lars Döpking

5.5.2025

Nicolò Palazzetti

Il paradiso perduto. Il fandom dell'opera nell'età digitale

23.6.2025

Nicolai Okunew

"Sind eben nur für Musik da." Heavy-Metal-Fans in der DDR

29.9.2025

Silke Borgstedt

Prototypisch untypisch – Sinus-Milieus, musikalischer Geschmack und die Vermessung des Alltags

13.10.2025

Lello Savonardo

Sociologia della musica. La costruzione sociale del suono dalle tribù al digitale

17.11.2025

Steffen Lepa

Streaming, Liveness und die Pandemie. Digitale Mediamorphosen des Musiklebens im frühen 21. Jahrhundert als Generationenphänomen