

# Popular Music and the Self in Contemporary Fiction

May  
30<sup>th</sup>–31<sup>st</sup>, 2019  
Vienna

As “the mythology of our time” (S. Rushdie), popular music plays an eminent role in contemporary literature, creating atmosphere, evoking nostalgia, portraying milieus, and acting as a poignant marker of personal identity and a significant factor in the distinguishing of the self from others.

Fiction as a medium for representing society draws connections between popular music (pop, rock, soul, jazz, hip-hop, punk etc.) and the self, be it by depicting the literary character as a musician struggling between authentic artistic expression and the demands of the music industry, or as a listener. Similar to reading preferences, musical taste splits the audience into cultural groups, often corresponding with other socioeconomic factors such as gender, national identity, and age. Popular music engenders a specific communication inside these groups and distinguishes them from others, the interplay of inclusion and exclusion following the wish for individuation in mass culture. In particular for those who are coming of age, popular music is a way of exploring one's self and negotiating identity: musicians become role models influencing moral and political orientations, defying social norms, supporting minorities, encouraging personal liberation and individuation, and offering modes of escapism from the everyday self.

Apart from this focus on the sociology of music expressed in fiction, the conference seeks to establish a cartography of the various functions and roles of popular music in literature. Its papers address the modern myths pop creates (global, national, or even local in nature), and explores the rhetoric of melophrasis – literary renderings of musical creation, performance, and listening experiences – as well as analyses of musical patterns, imagery, and references (to lyrics, bands, songs etc.) interlaced within narratives from various linguistic and cultural contexts.

## Conference Venue:

Schreyvogelsaal, Hofburg, 1010 Wien  
(Entry: Michaelerkuppel, Batthyanystiege, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor)

## Supported by:



universität  
wien



StaDt Wien

Vienna Doctoral Academy:  
Theory and Methodology in  
the Humanities

ÖFG // ÖSTERREICHISCHE  
FORSCHUNGSGEMEINSCHAFT



universität  
wien



# Popular Music and the Self in Contemporary Fiction

May 30<sup>th</sup>–31<sup>st</sup>, 2019

**Host:** Department of Comparative Literature, University of Vienna

**Organizer:** Norbert Bachleitner and Juliane Werner

**Conference Venue:** Schreyvogelsaal, Hofburg, 1010 Wien

Entry: Michaelerkuppel, Batthyanystiege, 1st Floor

**Contact:** [norbert.bachleitner@univie.ac.at](mailto:norbert.bachleitner@univie.ac.at)

VERGLEICHENDE  
LITERATURWISSENSCHAFT



# Conference Program

## Popular Music and the Self in Contemporary Fiction (May 30<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019)

### Thursday, May 30<sup>th</sup>

09:30 a.m. Welcome

09:45 a.m. Introduction

#### Session 1 (Chair: Daniel Stein)

10:00 a.m. *Nicola Gess* (University of Basel): Musical Self-Narration. From Romanticism to Pop Literature

10:45 a.m. *Jeffrey Roessner* (Mercyhurst University, Pennsylvania): The Three Ages of Fan: Identity, Irony, and New Sincerity in Roddy Doyle's Popular Music Narratives

#### 11:30 a.m. Coffee Break

#### Session 2 (Chair: Daniel Syrový)

12:00 p.m. *Klaus Nathaus* (University of Oslo): Rock Music in Norwegian Fiction: Affording a New Male Middle Class Self?

12:45 p.m. *Thomas Gurke* (University of Koblenz and Landau): Authenticity, Self-Fashioning and Popular Identity in Tom Cho's *Look Who's Morphing*

#### 01:30 p.m. Lunch Break

#### Session 3 (Chair: Christoph Leschanz)

03:00 p.m. *Peter Apfl* (University of Vienna): Popular Music in Contemporary German Literature. The Case of Frank Witzel

03:45 p.m. *Norbert Bachleitner* (University of Vienna): An Alternative Jazz Biography: Ronald Pohl's *Kind aus Blau*

#### 04:30 p.m. Coffee Break

#### Session 4 (Chair: Norbert Bachleitner)

05:00 p.m. *Hannah Schroder* (University of Vienna): Anarchy in the UKR: Performing National and Gendered Identities in Serhiy Zhadan's Post-Independence Ukraine

05:45 p.m. *Diedrich Diederichsen* (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna): Schamane oder Messias? Der Schallplattenhändler als höheres Wesen

#### 07:00 p.m. Reception

### Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup>

#### Session 5 (Chair: Hannah Schroder)

09:30 a.m. *Daniel Syrový* (University of Vienna): Fictitious Music and Musicians

10:15 a.m. *Juliane Werner* (University of Vienna): "It Ain't Me Babe": Fictional Representations of Bob Dylan, or Writing the Unknowable

#### 11:00 a.m. Coffee Break

#### Session 6 (Chair: Klaus Nathaus)

11:30 a.m. *Stefan Kutzenberger* (University of Vienna): A Lecture on Those Killed by Neil Young (N. Kermani)

12:15 p.m. *Will Straw* (McGill University, Montréal): Nested bohemia. Music and Literature in Montreal's Mile End Neighbourhood

#### 01:00 p.m. Lunch Break

#### Session 7 (Chair: Nicola Gess)

02:30 p.m. *Jonathan Kropf* (University of Kassel): Changing Infrastructures of Taste Formation?

03:15 p.m. *Simon Nagy* (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna): "Is It Because I'm Black?": Pop Music and the Politics of Identification in Jonathan Lethem's *The Fortress of Solitude*

#### 04:00 p.m. Coffee Break

#### Session 8 (Chair: Erich Hertz)

04:30 p.m. *Daniel Stein* (University of Siegen): Singer-Songwriter and Literary Author: Steve Earle as American Storyteller

05:15 p.m. *Simon Frith* (Edinburgh College of Art): Reading as Listening; Listening as Reading

#### 07:00 p.m. Conference Dinner