

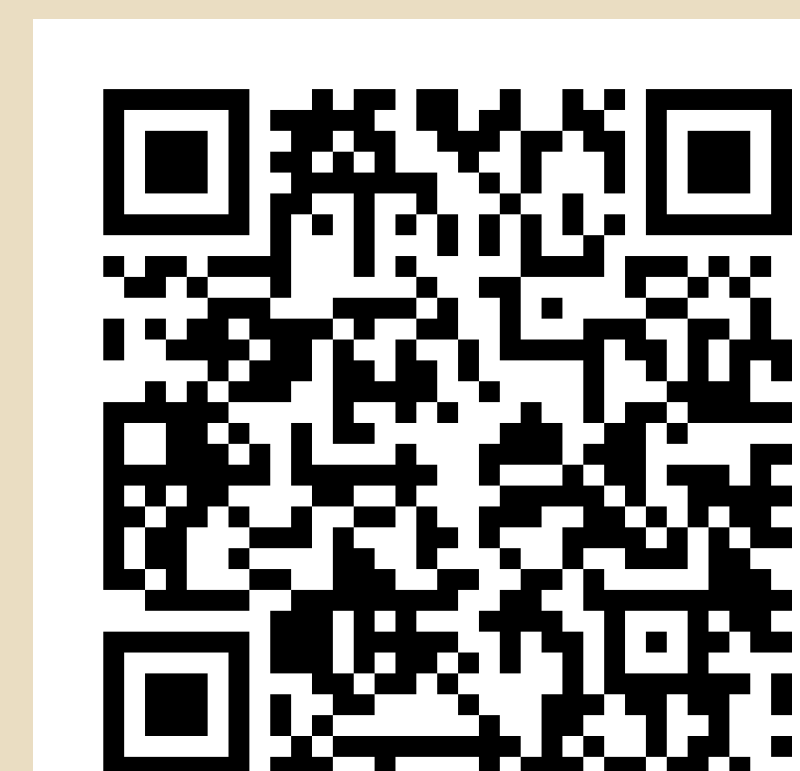
MUSIC, MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

The story of émigré musicians from Nazi Europe in Britain

This exhibition, curated as part of a major research project at the Royal College of Music, celebrates the mobile lives of musicians who emigrated to the UK from Nazi Europe in the 1930s and 40s. Of approximately 50,000 (mostly Jewish) refugees who settled in Britain at this time, around 400 were professional musicians. Many fled racist persecution in Germany and Austria, while others left for political or ethical reasons. Some arrived well in advance of the outbreak of war and others after the war's end, having first experienced the terror of the Holocaust. They had to adapt to a new language and environment, and many of them developed highly successful careers. Their presence gave a whole generation of musicians in Britain 'an opportunity to transfer from a national into an international world' (Dame Janet Baker). Others, by contrast, would never really settle, and would find themselves excluded from British society and musical life.

Because of recent conflicts in Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan, and other parts of the world, more people than ever are on the move. Migration can be a highly-contested topic, and dealing with its realities is one of the big challenges of our time. Music — perhaps the most mobile of all art forms — has been shaped by migration for centuries. This exhibition invites you to reflect on the dynamic influence of migration and transnational mobility on culture, as well as the benefits of negotiating and overcoming cultural differences.

ONLINE RESOURCE



Research from the project has been collected in a major online resource, 'Singing a Song in a Foreign Land,' which we encourage you to visit. It includes oral history interviews, storymaps, stories, biographies, repertoire guides, and free sheet music.

This exhibition has been created as part of the RCM's Music, Migration and Mobility research project, a partnership with Royal Holloway University of London and Salzburg University in Austria. The project is funded by The Arts and Humanities Research Council.



Photographs from the original
exhibition at the Royal College
of Music Museum
by Claire Chevalier

