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Music by Holocaust victims preserved and presented

Ostracized Music- From Germany to San Diego showcased works by nine Jewish composers whose music was banned by the Nazis and whose lives were deeply disturbed, or, in the cases of Viktor Ullmann, Gideon Klein and Leo Smit, totally wiped out at Nazi death camps...

Jackie G'mach, JCC Director of Programming heard about the Ostracized Music program from Neal Brastoff of the American Jewish University in Los Angeles. This is the second year that the director of the Schwerin Conservatory, Volker Ahmels and Friederike Haufe have brought competition winners from their Ostracized Music Festival to the US to perform this repertoire. The directors invite students from Europe and Israel to participate in the Schwerin Festival. They also invite Holocaust survivor musicians to share with the students insight into the music and knowledge of the composer's lives...

The program concluded with the directors themselves performing four hands duos by Alexandre Tansman and Darius Milhaud. Volker Ahmels introduced each selection. All the student participants displayed a high level of talent and skill... Belgium-born Leo Smit's Divertimento for four hands, performed with excellent artistry by Haufe and Ahmels, proved to be a most beautiful and engaging work...

The directors are to be commended for introducing the next generation to the music of ostracized composers, and for teaching, through music, the lessons of the Holocaust. This program was underwritten by the German Consulate.

Eileen Wingard