

Fellows



Lisa Feurzeig

Fulbright/IFK_Senior Fellow

Duration of fellowship

01. October 2017 bis 31. January 2018

Lisa Feurzeig

PROJECT TITLE

Nostalgia or Contemporary Critique? The Role of Classic Operettas in Contemporary Austria and Neighboring Countries

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The operetta has been socially critical ever since its emergence in the 1850s. Works by Offenbach, Gilbert and Sullivan, Strauss, Kálmán, and others mock social institutions and prejudices. After World War II, their reception took a new turn, though: operettas once considered satirical began to be seen rather nostalgically, as a look back to a better, simpler time.

Today Europe is experiencing many problems that these operetta figures already confronted in their time: a multicultural landscape with a great deal of racial, class, and religious difference. Are the old operettas now being presented as nostalgia or as contemporary critique? How do audiences understand these works and their stagings? Observation and interviews at the Vienna Volksoper, the Komische Oper in Berlin, and the Budapest Operetta Theater will provide insight into these questions in order to better understand the contemporary significance of these works.

CV

Lisa Feurzeig is Professor of Music at Grand Valley State University in Michigan. She studied Musicology in College Park, Maryland, and with Philip V. Bohlman in Chicago. Susan Youens was also influential to her development. Feurzeig's work is centered on text-music relations in various German-language music genres. She wrote a book about Schubert's relation to the early Romantics and his musical versions of texts by Schlegel and Novalis. In addition, she has published historical-critical editions of German *Lieder* and popular theater pieces. An additional area of her research concerns the music of the German-American composer William Henry Pommer, in cooperation with the Deutschheim State Historic Site in Missouri and the Missouri Humanities Council. Her fascination with the operetta sprung from a realization that crystallized out of her work on popular theater: comedy is not always light, and it can achieve quite a lot!

Publications

"Can Creative Interpretation Keep Operetta Alive? Kálmán's *Die Herzogin von Chicago* at the Vienna Volksoper in 2004", in: *Studia Musicologica* (im Erscheinen); *Schubert's Lieder and the Philosophy of Early German Romanticism*, Farnham, UK 2014; gem. mit John Sienicki (Hg.), *Quodlibets of the Viennese Theater*, Middleton, Wisconsin 2008.