

International and Interdisciplinary Conference

‘Im Bad wöll wir recht fröhlich sein’ – ‘We shall be cheerful at the bath’.

Bath Music and Spa Music in the Early Modern Period.

CRC 1391 Different Aesthetics

Tübingen, 22nd – 24th September 2022

CRC 1391 (Universität Tübingen)

The Collaborative Research Centre 1391 Different Aesthetics at Tübingen examines aesthetic phenomena of the pre-modern era and aims to outline decisive approaches to issues surrounding aesthetics. The aim of the interdisciplinary and internationally open research program is to re-evaluate pre-modern aesthetic acts and artefacts. With an in-depth historical approach, ongoing artistic and societal questions can be better understood and usefully further developed.

Sub-project A04 Bath Music and Spa Music

This sub-project examines the connections between music and bathing in the early modern period, as reflected in text, image and sheet music sources. Music in this setting can be situated at a dynamic intersection of *curare* and *delectare*, *narratio* and *moralisatio*. The academic examination of the rich and varied music connected to the bath and the act of bathing, despite the obvious interdisciplinary approaches available, is still lacking when considering the omnipresence of this social and cultural phenomenon.

Conference

The interdisciplinary and international conference, including presentations and roundtables/workshops, aims to shed light on bathing and spa music in the communicative and interactive space of the *public bath*. This shall be investigated through the discussion of applied dietetics, artistic practice, reflective theory, as well as social and confessional communication, as reflected in text, image and sheet music. Due to the parameters of this CRC project, the focus shall be on the early modern period and on the German-speaking area; more comprehensive perspectives are welcome.

Questions

How can the aesthetic (self-)perception of bathing and therapeutic music be approached through the dynamics of this social practice, in which medical-dietetic discourse, practical and theoretical musical knowledge and social spaces are combined? The approach of the conference is to validate the understanding of baths as heterotopias (Foucault). Music is

performed, heard and evaluated in context of the bath, alternately respected and rejected (e.g. music as disruption, ban on love songs). Baths are conceived of as institutionalized social spaces, in which actors and artefacts engage in specific and pre-determined forms of interaction – be that within reality or the imagination.

Sources

A variety of sources provide information about the forms and institutional characteristics of music in the context of bathing and therapeutic treatment in the early modern period, or alternatively reflect on these practices. This includes medical and balneological treatises, regional bathing regulations, diaries and letters, scientific and literary texts, spiritual and secular bathing songs, paintings, woodcuts, graphics, etc. The aim is to reach a deeper understanding of their functional and aesthetic potential in an interdisciplinary context.

Topics of Interest

For example, the following topics emerge from the sources:

- The bath as a cultural practice within the early modern period
- Text genres as sources for bath and spa music
- *Musica aegrotos sanat*: dietetic and medicinal aspects of bath music
- Institutional aspects of bath and spa music in history and the present
- Musical sources (bath songs)
- Musical aspects (instruments, performance contexts, etc.)
- The perception of bathing and bath music – between *curatio* and *delectatio, narratio* and *moralisatio*
- Bath architecture (including acoustic aspects)
- Representation of music at the fountain of life/ youth
- Theological/ confessional aspects

Conference Proceedings

The conference shall encompass presentations (up to 30 mins) and roundtables/ workshops (with brief opening statements). Poster presentations are also encouraged. The organisers plan to publish contributions in an edited volume.

Conference Structure

We would like to hold the conference in person, taking relevant health and safety precautions, but a digital hybrid form may be adopted if necessary. We shall do our best to accommodate the wishes and needs of conference participants.

Proposals for any of the presentation topics and categories are invited to be sent by the end of February 2022. These should include a brief CV and a summary of ca. 300 words in German or English. Please send these to both the following e-mail addresses:

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