



ARBO - GESELLSCHAFT FÜR MUSIK UND THEATER  
 ARBO - COMPANY FOR MUSIC AND THEATRE  
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# "Alma and Arnold Rosé"



**"Alma and Arnold Rosé" - An inclusive Visual Music- & Theatre Project in Austrian Sign Language & Spoken German performed by Markus Rupert (Voice and Austrian Sign Language) and the "arbo-ensemble" directed by Herbert Gantschacher with costumes and objects created by the visual artist Burgis Paier**

**PREMIERE: Friday 24th of January 2025, at 21.00 pm**  
**Second Performance: Saturday 25th of January 2025, at 21.00 pm**

**Tickets:** 29,- €, reduced 23,- €, Youth (till 18 years) 12,- €, Youth with Youthcard of the City of Villach € 8,- €, Culturepassport 10,- € and reduced prize for a group of adults starting with 10 persons.

Tickets at **Ö-Ticket** and at the "neuebuehnevillach" [office@neuebuehnevillach.at](mailto:office@neuebuehnevillach.at)  
 Telefon 04242-287164 oder Fax 04242-287164-14



Both performances are broadcasted directly to the internet on <https://www.arbos.at/livestream/>.





Directed and produced by Herbert Gantschacher

Costumes and objects created by the visual artist Burgis Paier

Sign Language Coach: Werner Mössler

Performed by: Markus Rupert (Voice and Austrian Sign Language) and the "arbos-ensemble" (Violin: Thomas Trsek; Accordion: Bojana Foinidis; Clarinet, Bass-Clarinet and Saxophone: Nicola Vitale; Percussion: Adi Schober)

"Concert for Two Violins" composed by Johann Sebastian Bach (BWV 1043) arranged for small chamber orchestra by Herbert Gantschacher with the use of the original recording in citation of the concert performed by Alma and Arnold Rosé, which is preserved of these great artists of the 20th century.



## Herbert Gantschacher "The Rosé-Complex. About Arnold, Eduard and Alma Rosé"

The concertmaster of the Imperial-Royal Court Opera orchestra and the Vienna Philharmonic, the violinist Arnold Rosé, and his brother, the cellist Eduard Rosé, were in a close private relation to Gustav Mahler. Arnold Rosé visited Gustav Mahler in the Villa Antonia at Mayernigg in the summer of 1900 in order to work with Mahler on his compositions in a practical way, specifically on the violin solo in the scherzo of the third movement of the fourth symphony, the score of which Mahler dedicated to Arnold Rosé. Arnold Rosé was also married to Mahler's sister Justine, who died in 1938. Alfred Rosé was married to Mahler's younger sister Emma Marie Eleanor, who died in 1933. **So the two sisters of Gustav Mahler were spared what happened to their husbands Alfred Rosé and Arnold Rosé as well as the daughter of Arnold and Justine Rosé, Alma, during the reign of terror of the National Socialists.**



*Arnold Rosé, concertmaster of the opera orchestra and the Vienna Philharmonic was in 1919 one of the thirty Austrians signers of the manifesto written by Romain Rolland, among them Alfred Adler, Mathias Hauer, Wilhelm Jerusalem, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Heinrich Lammasch, Alexander Moissi, Arthur Schnitzler, Egon Wellesz or Stefan Zweig. The German version was created by Georg Friedrich Nicolai, the great-grandson of Otto Nicolai, who started in Vienna in 1842 the first "Philharmonic Academy". The signers of this manifesto document their resistance against the German Worker's Party and National Socialism. The signers manifests for a democratic organised Europe and against the peace treaties negotiated in the suburbs of Paris. The journalist Heinrich Kanner presented the vision of an European Union of States, who should consist of all European States.*

Little is known to the general public is the fact that Arnold Rosé, solo violinist and concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic, was a staunch republican democrat. As a musician and concert master of the Opera Orchestra and the Vienna Philharmonic, he was one of the thirty Austrians to sign Romain Rolland's manifesto in 1920, including Alfred Adler, Josef Matthias Hauer, Wilhelm Jerusalem, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Heinrich Lammasch, Alexander Moissi and Arthur Schnitzler, Egon Wellesz or Stefan Zweig can be found. The German version of the manifesto was written by Georg Friedrich Nicolai, Otto Nicolai's

great-grandson, who held the first "Philharmonic Academy" in Vienna in 1842 and thus co-founded the Vienna Philharmonic. The signers of this manifesto explicitly documented their attitude against the nationalism of the German Workers' Party and National Socialism, the signatories of the manifesto stand for a democratically organized Europe and against the peace agreements presented in the suburbs of Paris. Such a public statement against the hate-spreading Nationalists and National Socialists and for democratic development was a courageous step, considering that the return of Georg Friedrich Nicolai as a lecturer at the Charité, the medical faculty of the University of Berlin, in 1920 was prevented by nationalist and national socialist students, because they saw Georg Friedrich Nicolai as a traitor to the German project of the central powers and one of the responsible persons for the defeat in the Great War. The students were supported by the rectorate and academic council of the university as collaborators, who revoked the teaching qualification for Georg Friedrich Nicolai, who subsequently emigrated first to Argentina and then to Chile and taught as a professor of physiology at universities. The expulsion of the intellectual spirit from central Europe began as early as the early 1920s.



*Arnold Rosé as the concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic in rehearsals with Arturo Toscanini in the Musikverein in Vienna. With the Rosé-Quartet Arnold Rosé imprinted the musical life till 1946. Also Alma Rosé performed in the quartet of her father also at the Salzburg Festival.*

**Alma Rosé grew up in this political and intellectual environment and experienced the Great War and its consequences as a child. And Alma Rosé became a gifted violinist who was mainly taught by her father. She founded her own women's chamber orchestra, the "Wiener Walzermadeln" based on the model of the women's string quartet by violinist Marie Soldier-Roeger, to which Gustav Mahler's girlfriend, violist Natalie Bauer-Lechner, also belonged. The concert programs of the women's orchestra bore the modern signature of Alma Rosé, combining modern new music, light music and classical music with means of the performing arts such as dance and the use of costumes. It can therefore certainly be said that these concerts already contained scenic elements to deepen the music.** Such scenic concerts with a music-dramatic and music-dramaturgical concept were and are developed and directed and produced by the director Herbert Gantschacher first with the ARGE New Music Theatre since 1989 and continued with ARBOS - Company for Music and Theatre since 1992 with the chamber orchestras "ensemble creative" consisting of members of the Carinthian Symphony Orchestra and the today existing "arbos-ensemble" of ARBOS - Company for Music and Theatre.



# ALMA ROSÉ

*und ihr Kammerorchester*

*Alma Rosé was not only a fantastic violinist, she was also innovative artist when it came to the presentation of her concert programs with the Viennese waltz girls in blue costumes and with dancers, an early form of staged scenic concerts.*

**Alma Rosé has also performed several times with her women's chamber orchestra in Carinthia. The music critic of the Carinthian daily newspaper "Free Voices", Dr. Cadorna, wrote about the concert given on January 3, 1938 in the small music hall in Klagenfurt on January 5, 1938 under the heading "Theatre Concert" a concert review that subjected the work of Alma Rosé and the members of the women's chamber orchestra to a serious critical appraisal: "On a guest performance tour to Italy, the Viennese violinist Alma Rose paid us a short visit with her performing and dancing group. The artist, well known by her name, prepared a very enjoyable evening for the not very numerous visitors - most of whom didn't want to defy the nightly cold - the violinist and her eight very clean Viennese waltz girls, who probably took their costume color from the beautiful 'blue' Danube formed as a very well practiced chamber orchestra. Violins, violoncello, two pianos and also a harp united in the most beautiful Viennese waltzes, such as 'Tales from the Vienna Woods', 'Viennese Blood', 'Wine, Women and Song', 'Gold and Silver' (Lehár) become a sonorous, often also quite spirited performance. One heard in this composition, from Alma Rosé as the first violinist, a rhythmically sharp and effective rendition of the 'Rosenkavalier' waltz, one also had nothing against encountering the melodious 'Ave Maria' by Bach-Gounod, a jubilee number of the Viennese radio, in the concert hall, because it was performed very sonorous by Alma Rosé, who is also a technically skilled violonist, with cello and harp accompaniment. In her own solo, with a Schubert phantasy, the harpist Mimi Bohm presented herself to be an excellent master of her noble instrument and thus gave the whole long program one of the most valuable and perhaps the most interesting**

numbers. The cellist Iringo Sassy, with pieces by Rubinstein and David Popper, also won a lot of applause for her great technical skill. In the ensemble, the not very voluminous cello was often lost. On the two Bösendorfer grand pianos from the Alois Langer piano house, two confident players performed their musical duties: Gerti Schöttner and Hilde Kettner. The former, a funny little person, brilliantly understood how to give the announced 'cheerful note' to the 'unabridged big city programme' with a few Viennese chansons. The way she expressed the 'Maybe', how she told the story of the 'Tirolerhut' with witty pointing or made her listeners understand: 'On Sunday at half past three my Ferdinand will come to me...', it was all so charming and unerring humor that actually decided the success of the evening. The applause confirmed the victory, the victory of warmth over wintry coolness ... The friendly Viennese waltz girls had also brought along two very good dancers. Poldi Peroutka and Liane Nagypal, solo dancers of the Viennese dance group Bodenwieser, have done their proven school credit in several dance numbers - including a tip-toe rehearsal. The waves of the very pretty and skilfully danced waltz "On the beautiful blue Danube" splashed away over their not very Viennese-sounding names in the all-unifying element of Viennese music and Viennese dance ... Have a good trip on in three-four time!"



*Alma Rosé with the Viennese Women's Orchestra on tour in Italy.*

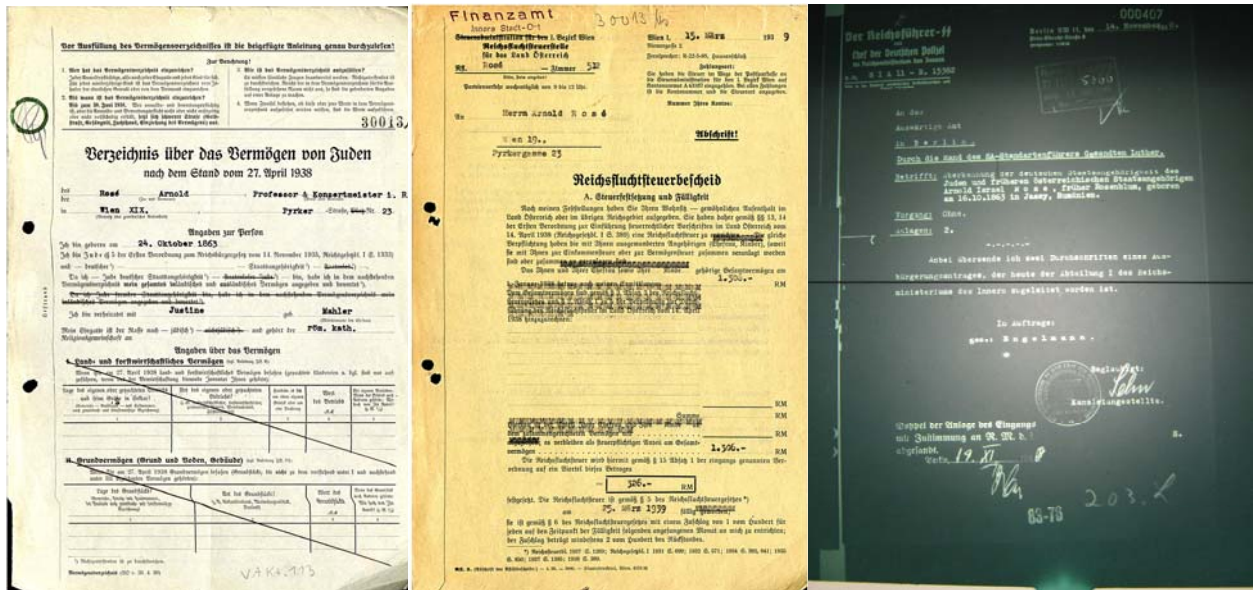
**From the criticism it appears that only a small number of audiences followed the concert, so Carinthia is not a soil for new forms of expression of the performing arts in the combination of modern music, light music, classical music and dance combined with costumes. Alma Rosé will conceive this form of concerts for a completely different audience at a place of industrial mass**

**annihilation, rehearsing and performing namely at the concentration and extermination camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau.**

In 1933, the National Socialists were democratically left in power in the German Reich, in contrast to the democratic Republic of Austria, because here the Christian-Social Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss launched a totalitarian exercise of power and established the Austro-Fascist corporate state, which was reigned then by the Christian-Social Chancellor, the native Carinthian Kurt Schuschnigg. The ideological bankrupt estate gave up its existence on the night of March 12th to 13th, 1938 with the annexation to the National Socialist German Reich. As the National Socialists had come to power democratically in the German Reich, so they did not need to seize power because supposedly democratic forces handed it over to them on a silver platter, so to speak, at the latest when on March 24, 1933 in the German Reichstag members such as Theodor Heuss - later the first President of the Federal Republic of Germany - voted for the enabling law of the National Socialists, thus giving the Nazis a democratic majority to eliminate democracy in the Weimar Republic. This fact of the parliamentary democratically legitimized seizure of power by the National Socialists with the roll-call vote on the "Law to Eliminate the Distress of the People and the Reich" in the second session on Thursday, March 23, 1933, paved the way for the National Socialists to their totalitarian rule. The complete cast of votes in the Reichstag was 538, 444 members of the Reichstag voted in favor of the Enabling Act, with 94 votes against from the Social Democratic Party alone. The bill was introduced by the National Socialist German Workers' Party and the German National People's Party. And on page 45 of the minutes of the meeting, the yes votes of the members of the German state party are noted, including the yes vote of Theodor Heuss as Dr. Heuß in the writing of the original document.

**Armed with this power, the Nazis began a rapid ideological restructuring of the German Reich, because National Socialism had announced its claims to totality for all areas of German life. This also happened in the spirit of their ideology of the supremacy of the master races over a life unworthy of living. And on April 7, 1933, number 34 in Reichsgesetzblatt I, the "Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service" was published. This law formed the basis for the exclusion of persons of Jewish origin. And in 1933, the brother of the concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic, Eduard Rosé, was affected. At the age of 75, Eduard Rosé was removed from the Weimar Music Academy, his wife Emma Marie Eleanor, Gustav Mahler's sister, died in 1933, so that he and his two sons now had to eke out their lives in Weimar.**

**In Europe in the 20th century, racism was also scientifically justified by the National Socialists in order to provide a supposedly legal basis for the Nuremberg Race Laws and anti-Semitism. Such works have also been published by renowned German authors, such as the political scientist and National Socialist Otto Koellreuter in his work "Grundriss der Allgemeine Staatslehre / Outline of the general theory of the state" from 1933 in the publishing house of J.C.B. Mohr. In 1936 Heinrich Krieger's "Racial Law in the United States" was published by the well-known Berlin publishing house Junker and Dünhaupt. Krieger's book was also based on the US-American Constitution. Koellreuter and Krieger were, so to speak, intellectual promoters of racism and anti-Semitism. On the basis of their so-called scientific nature, the following laws were put into effect on September 16, 1935 with Reichsgesetzblatt I No. 100, namely the "Reich Citizenship Law" and the "Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor", which was the next step the disenfranchisement of the Jewish population in the German Reich had been carried out. In terms of indexing, these laws were and are known as the so-called "Nuremberg Laws".**



After the annexation of the Austrofascist corporate state to the National Socialist Germany, Arnold Rosé had to create an inventory of his assets. The National Socialist administration used this confiscated property in 1939 to pay the Reich Flight Tax in the amount of 1,306 German Reichsmarks before he was subsequently expatriated in 1940.

The fact that Arnold Rosé courageously presented himself as an opponent of National Socialist ideology in public 19 years before Austria's annexation by the National Socialists was punished for his courage no later than March 12, 1938 after the violent military and political execution of the annexation by the National Socialists. To this end, the Führer and Reich Chancellor issued a decree on March 13, 1938, which regulates the swearing-in of civil servants. From now on, Jews are no longer allowed to be civil servants because they cannot prove that they are of German blood. And as a member of the State Opera Orchestra, which also makes up the Vienna Philharmonic according to the association's statutes, concertmaster Arnold Rosé is a professional civil servant. The basis for this is formed by the laws of the German Reich of April 7, 1933 and September 16, 1935, which have now also been applied retrospectively - and thus illegally - in the former Austro-Fascist corporate state after its connection to the National Socialist Reich. But whether a law was applied unlawfully or legally, that played no role in the still existing sham democracy of the National Socialist German Reich. Arnold Rosé was thus dismissed as concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic.

Since April 23, 1938, the decree issued by the Führer and Reich Chancellor on April 23, 1938 to transfer the administration of justice in Austria to the Reich applied to all property rights. The following laws were subsequently put into effect by decree of the Führer: The Reich Citizenship Law of September 15, 1935 and the first ordinances of the Reich Citizenship Law and the implementation of the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor of November 14, 1935. On April 26, 1938 the ordinances on the registration of Jewish assets came into force, on May 20, 1938 the ordinance introducing the Nuremberg Race Laws and on May 31, 1938 and August 26, 1938 the ordinances on the reorganization of the Austrian professional civil service. Thus, all pseudo-legal preconditions had been created to start with the planned professional and financial disenfranchisement of Jews, including members of the Vienna Philharmonic, who were of Jewish origin, in the former Austrian fascist corporate state. In addition, the Jewish population had to fill out "lists of Jewish assets as of April 27, 1938" just like Arnold Rosé, whose wife Justine, Gustav Mahler's sister, had died in August 1938. After that, Alma Rosé took care of her father. At that time Alma Rosé was still married to the Czech violin virtuoso Váňa Přihoda and therefore had a



Czechoslovak passport, which also gave her protection under international law. And so she was able to help her father to flee from Vienna to London in 1939. **Arnold Rosé was subject to the Reich Flight Tax imposed on March 15, 1939 because he had previously given up his residence in Vienna in the Austrian state of the now German Reich. However, the Reich flight tax was not an invention of the National Socialist sham democracy, but was introduced on December 8, 1931 with the "Fourth [emergency] decree of the Reich President to secure the economy and finances and to protect internal peace" (RGBl. 1931 I, pp. 699-745 ) was put into effect, but was used to disenfranchise the Jewish population in terms of property rights. Arnold Rosé avoided paying this Reich flight tax by leaving the country just in time, which subsequently led to the Gestapo officially putting him on the wanted list. On November 14, 1940, the expatriation proceedings against Arnold Rosé were completed and German citizenship was confirmed by the Reichsführer of the SS, Heinrich Himmler, with the file number B.Nr. S I A 11 - R. 15382 withdrawn. So both Arnold Rosé and his daughter Alma were able to finance themselves their escape from the persecution by the Nazis at a great expense. Those of Europe's Jewish population who did not manage to flee were killed in ghettos, concentration and extermination camps, also as they were members of the Roma and Sinti, the Carinthian Slovene population, homosexuals, priests and religious, Jehovah's Witnesses, people from the political resistance, and those who fought in Spain, forced labourers, deserters, conscientious objectors, victims of revenge, resistance fighters and partisans, the disabled, the mentally ill and what the National Socialists called "anti-socials". And the data processing programs, which could already be used at this time electronically with the punch card system, were supplied by the US company IBM.**

In the last phase of his life, Eduard Rosé found himself in this National Socialist system of extermination. As a cellist, he had occasionally played in the Rosé Quartet with his brother Arnold. Eduard Rosé's wife Emma Marie Eleanor, Gustav Mahler's sister, died in Weimar on May 15, 1933. Eduard Rosé was court concert master in the Weimar Court Theatre Orchestra until 1926 and taught cello at the Grand Ducal Music School in Weimar until he was dismissed in 1933 because of his Jewish origins. In 1939 he was deprived of the radio because the decree of September 20, 1939 prohibited Jews from owning radios. On September 19, 1941, the ordinance on wearing the "Jewish star" came into force. Eduard Rosé resisted wearing the Jewish star and was arrested by the Gestapo as a result. The name Rosé had already been put on record by the Gestapo because of his brother Arnold. **Eduard Rosé was tortured by the Gestapo in custody and fined for alleged forgery of documents and other alleged crimes. In addition, he had to move into a Jewish home that was right next to his home. On September 20, 1942, at the age of 83, he was transported from Leipzig by Transport XVI/1, č. 730 deported to the Theresienstadt concentration camp and murdered there. In the death notice dated from January 24, 1943, enteritis and intestinal catarrh were listed as the illness and cause of death, which was due to poor nutrition, hygienic conditions and inadequate medical care in Theresienstadt.**

So in 1939 Alma Rosé played again in London with her father in the world-famous Rosé Quartet, for which she had previously worked, for example in the Rosé Quartet's concerts at the Salzburg Festival in 1936. In London, Arnold Rosé had the quartet newly formed, he himself played the violin on the first podium, Alma Rosé the second violin, the violist was Anton Ruzicka and on the cello Friedrich Siegfried Buxbaum, now a former Philharmonic player, who, like Arnold Rosé, was able to manage his escape from Vienna. **Alma Rosé replaced the violinist Julius Stwertka, one of those retired Vienna Philharmonic members who, together with his family,**

were about to be deported from Vienna to the Theresienstadt concentration camp on August 27, 1942 after his pension was withdrawn by the Vienna Philharmonic Association. He was also briefly involved in recreational activities there before he died there on December 17, 1942.



ARNOLD ROSÉ (from 1881 to 1938 leader of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra) and his daughter Alma, who now live in London.

*Arnold und Alma Rosé after the flight in 1939 from Vienna to London.*

But the fate will not be kind to Alma Rosé either. Due to a lack of work - father Arnold could literary spoken only keep his head above the water with donations from Bruno Walter and Arturo Toscanini and had to sell his valuable violin, as asylum seekers both were also banned from performing in Great Britain - Alma Rosé accepted an engagement in Holland in the hope that nothing could happen to her - after the divorce from Váša Přihoda, she entered into a sham marriage with the Dutchman Constant August van Leeuwen Boomkamp as some kind of protection from persecution. But after the illegal occupation of the neutral Netherlands by the German Wehrmacht, Alma Rosé had to go into the underground, where she gave illegal house concerts in order to be able to finance her escape to Northern America. The Netherlands were no longer a safe country for people of Jewish origin, as the musicians of the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Jewish origin, who were deported to Theresienstadt. In

December 1942, Alma Rosé's attempt to escape to France failed and she was arrested. In July 1943, Alma Rosé was deported from the Drancy internment camp to the Auschwitz death camp under the name of her Dutch husband. There she was assigned to the so-called medical department in Auschwitz - Hygienic and Bacteriological Examination Centre of the Waffen-SS, South-East - under the direction of Dr. Josef Mengele, who considered interest on her for medical experiments. Facing imminent death, Alma Rosé now revealed herself as a violinist and wanted to play a violin one more time in her life, before she expected to be killed. A corresponding high-quality violin was organized for her as quickly as possible. And with the quality she performed on the violin and her way of making music secured her survival at the moment. This kind of something like a prelude to exist now between life and death and the first concerts in the so-called medical department went well for Alma Rosé, so she got the artistic and musical direction of the women's orchestra in the Auschwitz-Birkenau women's camp, and the camp management was constantly looking for female musicians who were able to meet the musical demands of the management of the camps in Auschwitz and Auschwitz-Birkenau - it's hard to believe that by the fact the barbarism, which was given by these people caused and were responsible for that, because they knew what they were doing!



*The final station of Alma Rosé's artistic work was the Auschwitz-Birkenau annihilation camp. There she worked with the Women's Orchestra of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the members lived and worked in the barracks on the left side of the tracks next to the watchtower.*

The practice barracks for the imprisoned female musicians was located in the women's camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau in the immediate vicinity of the selection ramp, that means in the centre across from the three railway tracks that had been laid out, on which two deportation trains carrying Jewish victims could be unloaded at the same time. The third track was used for shunting the locomotives. When the singer Karel Berman was deported from the Theresienstadt concentration camp to the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination

**camp in the fall of 1944, according to his report, the SS doctor Mengele himself was at the ramp and carried out the selection.** First the women and the children were separated from the men. Then they were asked about the professions of those who had arrived, because the camp administration was looking for Jewish people among the deported Jews who were suitable for forced labor in the surrounding factories. **Karel Berman claimed to be a laborer and was subsequently assigned to the command of the incinerators in the crematoria, which were located right next to the gas chambers. An extermination unit always consisted of a team for managing the gas chamber and a team managing the crematorium, these buildings had been erected into the underground. Thus, the gassing and subsequent incineration of the Jewish victims in the camp complex were largely invisible.** The route from the selection ramp to the gas chambers was about a thousand meters. The extermination units, each consisting of a team for the gas chamber and the crematorium, were located at the end of the tracks on the left and right at the women's and men's camps in Auschwitz-Birkenau. **Since the practice barracks for the imprisoned musicians in the women's camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau was located in the centre across from the tracks of the selection ramp, the Jews who had arrived with the transports could certainly hear scraps of music from the rehearsing women's orchestra, which in turn feigned a degree of normality.**

The aim of the camp authorities' for use of music was to provide a musical stimulus in the form of rhythm to the imprisoned leaving and returning from forced labor, simply to increase productivity. **But Alma Rosé had something else in mind with the members of the orchestra, to save the lives of the members of the women's orchestra through the musical quality to be achieved. Artistically, Alma Rosé continued the musical work of her Vienna Women's Orchestra now also here at Auschwitz-Birkenau, for the musicians costumes were made from blue-dyed bed sheets in the color of the beautiful "blue" Danube - the waltz by the Viennese Jewish composer Johann Strauss (son) was also found in the concert program like Beethoven's first movement from his fifth symphony - the first bars were the signature melody of the BBC's German program during the Second World War, which was also secretly overheard in concentration camps, or a potpourri by Antonín Dvořák, whose music was also part of the degenerate music in the Third Reich belonged as well as the operetta "The White Horse Inn".** Fania Fénelon, which was a member of Alma Rosé's women's orchestra, characterized it as follows: "Our SS is very selective! In fact, they like music, but don't understand anything about it". Herbert Thomas Mandl, the violinist imprisoned in the Theresienstadt concentration camp, put it similarly, saying that the leisure activities in the Theresienstadt concentration camp had been created by the Jewish prisoners themselves - neither invented nor ordered by the SS camp management! Mandl was secretary of the Jewish self-government of the men's section of the Theresienstadt concentration camp and was a violinist and active musician in the "Freizeitgestaltung" at Theresienstadt's leisure time activities. In dealing with the SS camp administration, Mandl was aware of one thing "that the SS was not culturally tainted". **In Alma Rosé's programs for the Auschwitz-Birkenau women's orchestra, dance played an important role, as she did in the staged concerts up to March 1938 with her women's chamber orchestra "Wiener Walzermaedeln".** It was also some kind of "Playing for Time", as the American playwright Arthur Miller later put it in the title of his screenplay for the 1980 television film of the same name, "Playing for Time". **And Alma Rosé has almost entirely succeeded in the work of saving life facing death with the help of music. Only three musicians died in the concentration camp, including Alma Rosé herself, who died in Auschwitz on April 5, 1944 as a result of poisoning. The circumstances of Alma Rosé's death pointed to murder by poisoning, so that the**

SS doctor Josef Mengele himself ordered an autopsy with the clinical diagnosis of meningitis and that in an extermination camp where thousands of people were murdered every day. The diagnosis of the at Auschwitz imprisoned doctor Manca Švalbová moved towards methyl alcohol poisoning, as Alma Rosé confirmed to her that she had been drinking vodka, and in Auschwitz most alcohol involved also methyl alcohol.



*The rehearsal barracks of the women's orchestra in Auschwitz-Birkenau conducted by Alma Rosé.*

The fate of Gustav Mahler's niece, the violinist Alma Rosé, first became known to the general public through the biographical novel "Sursis pour l'orchestre" by Fania Fénelon by Marcelle Routier and then through the film "Spiel um Zeit / Playing for Time" based on the screenplay by Arthur Miller. And a debate ensued around both works that rightly continues to this day. **Because the German translation of the book by Fania Fénelon caused a stir.** If the French original is taken literally, there are several puns in it, loosely translated the title in German then means "suspension for the orchestra". **But the publisher decided for the title "Das Mädchenorchester in Auschwitz / The Girl's Orchestra", which alone does not do justice to the fact that women were members of the orchestra from a younger age to a middle age - Alma Rosé was 37 years old when she was deported to Auschwitz.** In English two translations are used namely "The Musicians of Auschwitz" and "The Women's Orchestra of Auschwitz", only the latter does justice to the situation. In the book, **Alma Rosé is also accused of Germanism and proximity to the Nazis, both of which are justified to be rejected, since the Rosé family has been proven to be republican democrats and pacifists.** Arthur Miller's "Spiel um Zeit / Playing for Time" was hotly debated because of actress Vanessa Redgrave's critical stance on Israel, but this did damage to the discussion of the important topic, because it is important that such a topic from the story with a cultural background deserves a broad discussion.



*The rehearsal barracks of Alma Rosé's women's orchestra in Auschwitz-Birkenau seen from the place of the complex of gas chambers on the right side of the watchtower.*

**In addition, it is always problematic when, instead of a differentiated view to the theme, keywords are used that do not do justice to the topic, as in the case of the Auschwitz women's orchestra, just as the keywords for the music ordered in the concentration camps do not do justice to a differentiated view. Because in the Theresienstadt concentration camp there was no music ordered, on the contrary, the SS camp administration in Theresienstadt banned music and the use of musical instruments. The Jewish prisoners fought for their own leisure activities, which first took place secretly in the underground and were then officially legalized, so to speak. And the propaganda film "THERESIENSTADT - A documentary from the JEWISH SETTLEMENT AREA" was only made under the direction of the imprisoned actor Kurt Gerron after the SS had not been able to make their own film at first.**

**Anita Lasker-Wallfisch - she was the cellist in Alma Rosé's women's orchestra from Auschwitz - aptly characterized the fate of Alma Rosé in an interview with the German radio of the Hessischer Rundfunk: "Gustav Mahler stood by her cradle, Josef Mengele by her stretcher".**

**In any case, Alma Rosé has succeeded in reviving her artistic conception of the "Viennese Waltz Girls" at the highest possible musical level, even in such a place of horror as Auschwitz.**

**In any case, the following members of the Rosé family survived the Nazi era and the Second World War: Arnold Rosé in English exile in London and his son Alfred Rosé in Canada, Eduard Rosé's sons, Wolfgang and Ernst, managed to escape to the USA.**