

Symphony Concert in Hanover (1940/41)

Abstract

Despite the war, many Germans still sought the entertainment of cultural venues, including theater, the symphony, and art exhibits. This photo was taken at the Kuppelsaal concert hall in Hanover in 1940/41. Although there are a number of empty seats, attendance does not seem to have suffered greatly from the war. Entertainment was available to Germans until the end of the war for various reasons: because it remained popular, because the regime recognized the need to satisfy Germans at home, and because escapism was an important part of coping with the lived reality of scarcities and worry as the war progressed. Yet this photo also reveals another important element of cultural life during the Third Reich: most of the people in this photo are dressed in their best clothes, suggesting that people still attended the symphony and other public forms of entertainment in order to be seen doing so. It remained important for elites to attend certain events and sit in choice seats. These facts suggest that, despite the regime's claims to have overcome class divisions with the idea of a racial community, social distinctions remained alive and entrenched in German society. Even as playlists, films, and art exhibits focused increasingly on "German" works and art policy officially took on more nationalistic overtones, society itself continued also to hold on to older traditions, values, and tastes.

Source



Source: Stadtarchiv München, Historisches Bildarchiv, KR 362-364/ II 27.

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