

## [GMTH International Music Theory Lecture #5](#)

The GMTH (society of German-language music theory) announces the [fifth event](#) in their international online lecture series, taking place on **Thursday, June 13, 2024, 19:00 CEST**. The panel will focus on the topic “Political Pressure and Abuse of Power in Academia and Music Institutions”. Two speakers, Stefan Pohlit and Vladimir Rannev, will discuss their experiences in Türkiye and Russia, respectively. The session will be chaired by Ellen Bakulina. Anyone interested in attending may register via [this website](#).

Die GMTH (Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie) kündigt die [fünfte Veranstaltung](#) ihrer internationalen Vortragsreihe an, die am Donnerstag, **13. Juni 2024, 19:00 Uhr MESZ** stattfinden wird. Thema des Panels ist »Political Pressure and Abuse of Power in Academia and Music Institutions«. Zwei Referenten, Stefan Pohlit und Vladimir Rannev, werden über ihre Erfahrungen in der Türkei und in Russland berichten. Als Moderatorin wird Ellen Bakulina mitwirken. Interessierte melden sich bitte über [dieses Formular](#) an.

**Thursday, June 13, 2024, 19:00 CEST – online via Zoom**

### *Political Pressure and Abuse of Power in Academia and Music Institutions*

Committee: Wendelin Bitzan, Stephan Schönlau

Please register in advance via the [GMTH website](#)

#### SPEAKERS



[Stefan Pohlit](#) studied composition and music theory in Germany, Switzerland, France, and Turkey. Emerging as an expert on the Middle East, he completed his doctorate at the research center MİAM (Istanbul Technical University) with a dissertation on Julien Jalâl Eddine Weiss’s tuning system for the kanun. He held academic positions in Germany and Turkey. Most of his publications explore topics in ethnomusicology and harmonic systems. Recent projects include commissions for the hr-Sinfonieorchester, the Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie, Klangforum Heidelberg, the Neue Vocalsolisten, and the *talysh||pontos project* (2022) under his own direction. In 2021, his first novel *Münzevi Adası* was published in Istanbul. [Photo credit: Kai Mehn]

**Abstract:** *My report will outline, for the first time, the true events that led to my illegal dismissal during my employment as an Assistant Professor of Composition at the Istanbul Turkish Music State Conservatory (2012–2014), during a wave of politically motivated expulsions. The measures, aimed to rid the conservatory of foreign staff, culminated in 2014 with extreme forms of discrimination, slander, and institutional violence. In 2018, after winning a lawsuit against the university in a widely publicized test case, I returned to Germany. However, misinformation and double standards continue to cripple my academic career.*



[Vladimir Rannev](#) is a composer and a former lecturer at the St. Petersburg State University. In 2003 he graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory, where he studied with Boris Tishchenko, and continued his studies in electronic music during 2003–2005, studying with Hans Ulrich Humpert at the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne. Rannev won various composition competitions and is a recipient of a *Gartow Stiftung* scholarship (Germany, 2002). He writes music for orchestra, chamber ensembles, and for the stage (five operas, one ballet, and incidental music for theaters in Berlin, Mannheim, Hamburg, Dresden, Wien, and others). Rannev's music has been performed in

Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the UK, Finland, Poland, the Netherlands, Ukraine, Japan, and the USA by various orchestras and ensembles.

**Abstract:** *Traditional music-theoretical disciplines may seem to be remote from current social-political contexts, since courses in harmony, solfège, counterpoint, and form analysis deal with musical language that, to the outside observer, may appear distanced from the more immediate social considerations. This is because much music theory, at least the way it is taught in Russia, involves music—both folk and professionally composed—created in the past or based on long-existing principles. Yet, totalitarian regimes extend their control into all spheres of human activity, including the study and performance of past musical styles, prescribing rules and directions from the outside. Thus, when political authorities intervene with the natural accumulation of experience within the field, they obstruct intellectual progress. In my report, I focus on how ideological pressure, having ceased with the collapse of the Soviet Union, is being restored in modern Russia specifically in the field of music theory, and what consequences this can lead to.*

## CHAIR



[Ellen Bakulina](#) is an Associate Professor of Music Theory at McGill University, Canada. She is a music theorist specializing in tonal music and theories. Originally from Russia, she holds degrees from the College of the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, McGill University, and City University of New York. Ellen's publications and conference presentations have contributed to the study of musical form, meter and rhythm, Schenkerian analysis, theories of tonal pairing, and various ideas that originate from Russian writings about music. She also specializes in the music of Sergei Rachmaninoff, Russian church music, and Viennese Classicism.