

Distinguished Lecturers in Music Theory Series



## Dr. Daphne Tan

Assistant Professor of Music Theory  
University of Toronto

### **“We All Have Become Listeners Today”: Viktor Zuckerkandl and Music Theory for a General Audience**

Tuesday, November 10, 2020  
12:45pm ET  
Via Zoom

<https://msu.zoom.us/j/92604472346>  
passcode: theory

Informal conversation with graduate  
students immediately to follow

Dr. Tan will also guest-teach courses on Wednesday, November 4th:

1. **MUS 381 (undergraduate 20th- and 21st-century music):**  
9:10–10:00am, 11:30am–12:20pm

Contact Dr. Cara Stroud ([cstroud@msu.edu](mailto:cstroud@msu.edu)) if you wish to attend.

2. **MUS 979 (graduate proseminar):**  
4:10–6:00pm

Contact Dr. James Sullivan ([sulli628@msu.edu](mailto:sulli628@msu.edu)) if you wish to attend.

#### **Lecture Abstract:**

The ideas of Viktor Zuckerkandl (1896–1965) have long captured the attention of music theorists, particularly those writing on energetics, music phenomenology, and rhythm and meter. Yet with few exceptions, Zuckerkandl’s essays, books, and lectures contain music-theoretical approaches tailored for a general audience. In the first half of our time together, I will present the paper whose abstract appears below. In the time remaining, I will explore a bigger question: What can music-theoretical activity in non-specialist realms reveal about the discipline? In this context, I will discuss some of Zuckerkandl’s educational materials for a mid-century listening public.

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This paper examines two lectures delivered by theorist-philosopher Viktor Zuckerkandl at the Eranos conferences. Established in 1933 under the influence of Carl Jung, Eranos has long been a site of esoteric thinking: scholars of religion and mythology, natural scientists, psychologists, philosophers, and members of the general public gather annually to discuss themes related to mysticism, the occult, and the irrational. I examine Zuckerkandl's adaptation of Schenkerian theory for this multidisciplinary audience.

In "Die Tongestalt" (1960), Zuckerkandl seeks an understanding of music-as-*Gestaltung* (creation, design), illustrating how time unfolds at multiple hierarchical levels in Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*. Drawing on unpublished correspondence between Zuckerkandl and Eranos founder Olga Fröbe-Kapetyn, I show that Zuckerkandl viewed the *Tongestalt* as the source of human self-awareness (*Selbsterkenntnis*) and Heinrich Schenker's theory as the key to unlocking it. The presence of Schenker is surprising given Zuckerkandl's audience. It also points to an alternative reception of Schenker's ideas that has received scant attention, one in which problematic aspects are sanitized through a wash of metaphysics.

In the second lecture, "The Truth of the Dream and the Dream of Truth" (1963), Zuckerkandl suggests that musicians have ready access to a "third space" that resides between physical and mental worlds. Demonstrating with analyses of the *WTC* again, and with reference to Jung, Zuckerkandl attempts to bring his audience into this realm. I show how this is motivated by Zuckerkandl's overarching belief in a generally accessible "musical thinking" that exists in a separate realm from "mere logical thinking."

#### **Bio:**

Daphne Tan is Assistant Professor of Music Theory at the University of Toronto and a specialist in the history of Western music theory and music cognition. She has published articles on the ideas of Ernst Kurth in relation to embodied listening, processual form, and harmonic theory (*Music Theory Spectrum*, the *Journal of Music Theory*, and *Theoria*), and is completing a translation of Kurth's *Musikpsychologie* (Routledge). Her current project on the writings of Viktor Zuckerkandl investigates the interplay of music theory and Western esotericism. Daphne has also conducted music cognition research on a range of topics, including diatonic modes, form, emotion, and expressive performance (*Music Perception, Psychology of Music, Musicae Scientiae*, and the *Journal of Interdisciplinary Music Studies*).