

Free essay on art and war

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BANGING THE DRUMS OF WAR

Banging the drums of war is not a casual observance. For millennia armies marched, and the drums went along with them. The cheerful dance tunes are replaced by more heavily cadenced rhythms. When injured soldiers return, or fail to return slower ballads become more popular. As peace returns along with a greater focus on home and family. This seems to be less evident today. Now we have more effective vehicles to deliver soldiers to the battlefield, and technological advancements that can deliver bombs with no aggressive human presence needed at all.

Trends in art and music are most easily viewed from a more distant perspective. World War II was a perfect example of how this evolution played out over the course of a full prewar, wartime, postwar, and peace time evolution. WW II was preceded by the Jazz Age. The Musical Cabaret gives us visual, audio and other insight into that world. However, it can also be view through the lens of Herman Hesse's Steppenwolf and Harry Haller's friend Hermione is not far from Sally Bowels. During the war the more steady rhythms of swings and foxtrots became popular as soldiers and sailors on leave looked to music as a way of taking their wives, sweethearts or girlfriends in their arms and blow off some steam, or share a romantic moment on the dance floor. This was the era of music like that of the Andrew Sisters and songs like Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree, (with anyone else but me). Movies like White Christmas and Holiday Inn chronicled in plot and music the sounds and attitudes of soldiers returning and assimilating into society. This include slower more romantic songs along with children's teaching songs like High Hopes. Finally the cycle moves into a more

reflective, family focus with movies like Sound of Music. .

Ultimately, it is not just the drums of war that shape the popular music experience through a wartime cycle, but also the needs of society. Soldiers march off to war, and learning to march in cadence is still an important drill, but military experience is far more than marching. Music is love, romance and family along with the attendant joys and woes. Because of this it affects and is affected by the full social wartime experience. The effects of a war on popular music can be seen long before war is declared, and continue long after.

Bibliography

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