Karl Schwedler and the Lutz Templin Orchestra

by Julia Bennet

Article published on February 24th 2012 | Music

There is not a lot known about Karl Schwedler and the Lutz Templin Orchestra except for the fact that they formed an integral part of German military music which was composed after Hitler assumed premiership. Karl, who was also called Charlie, was born in 1902 on August 13th. He grew up in the city of Cologne then as a young adult moved to Dusseldorf. He eventually landed a job with the broadcasting department in the section of Nazi Foreign Ministry which was responsible for dealing with the USA.

Charlie was known to many for his fluency in English and because of this talent, things worked out well for him as he was very interested on propaganda work. In order to get the phonograph records Charlie would personally go to countries that were considered neutral and buy up records that were by popular dance bands in the United States and Britain. In order to successfully broadcast the music over the air waves Charlie would need a band. So the Nazi swing band Lutz Templin Orchestra was formed. Karl Schwedler was the lead singer of the band and would belt out propaganda tunes to the most popular records on the market.

The Lutz Templin Orchestra was made up of Germans. At this time in history if a person wanted to express his musical talents then it meant that they would have to be loyal to the Nazis. The band consisted of 17 different people playing the instruments as Karl Schwedler sang the lyrics which had been strung together. Some of the members of this popular band were Lutz Templin, who was the tenor saxophonist, playing the trumpets was Rimix Van den Broek along with Nino Impallomeni, making the saxophone sing was Detlev Lais, while playing the piano was Tip Tisch Claar along with Primo Angeli.

Considering the Lutz Templin Orchestra existed at a time when Hitler was in command there has to be more behind the reason for playing the propaganda. In this time frame jazz could not be referred to jazz music. The purpose of the catchy tunes that made everyone want to swing the night away was so it could target the countries where the music was listened to so often. Therefore Karl Schwedler and his band were mere vehicles for the Third Reich. They were just given lyrics and music to play right before the live broadcast. Everyone was just enjoying having some fun with propaganda while playing with the words.

From around 1940 to 1945 the Lutz Templin Orchestra started changing musicians frequently. It would no longer be known as a German band since local Germans were being drafted for the Wehrmacht & Waffen-SS Musikkorps. Now the band would have members that were Dutch and Belgian, most of whom had received training in German military music when their countries had been annexed. However, there was no change in case of the lead singer Karl Schwedler who stayed with the band until they stopped playing in late 1945.

After the war was over the Lutz Templin Orchestra disintegrated and all its members went separate ways. Karl Schwedler was believed to have first taken his family to Bavaria for a brief period and then on to Dusseldorf for another brief period. Then in 1960 during the month of August Karl brought his two children and wife to live in the United States. No one really heard that much about Karl anymore since he mingled in with the crowds. It is not certain whether he passed away in the United States or if he had went back to Tegernsee. Karl was laid to rest in the year of 1973. His music which he loved singing can still be heard to this day thanks to the CDsâ€™ which have been compiled.

Article Source:
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Amongst the many names which represented the polished front of the Nazi regime, a Lutz Templin Orchestra was a prominent and renowned one. The band owes its popularity to its founder and lead singer a Karl Schwedler who excelled in German military music as also other genres like Jazz.

Article Keywords:
Lutz Templin Orchestra, Karl Schwedler

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