



Erich Ziegler was born on January 3rd 1900 in Berlin, German Reich and died on December 24th 1948 in The Hague, Netherlands. He was a German musician, orchestra leader and composer.

### **Life**

It would be wrong to think that Ziegler's life had been uneventful in the years preceding 1933. He was a published composer and was Kapellmeister for a band that did not release recordings.

As a Jew he came to be excluded in the Third Reich, and although a native Berliner emigrated to the Netherlands, where he joined Willy Rosen's Theatre Group as musical director for the "Theater der Prominenten". He was involved in all of the productions and assisted Rosen with music and direction.

During the German occupation in his new adopted home Ziegler was arrested and detained on December 2, 1942 in the transit camp Westerbork. There he took part, as of May 1943 at the side of Willy Rosen, as a pianist and composer on camp Cabaret which were hosted and directed by Max Ehrlich. Ziegler participated in every production assisting Rosen with composition, directing the orchestra and also appearing on stage to play duets with Willy Rosen.



Ziegler was a favourite of the Kamp Kommandant and was known for playing a Jazz Version of Beethoven's Ode to Joy. Ziegler was called upon to entertain the Kommandant's guests, which included Adolf Eichmann. This may explain why Ziegler was never transported with most of the other members of the Theater Group. He survived the war. On April 12, 1945 Ziegler was released from Westerbork. He stayed

in the Netherlands and found employment as musical director at the Skala Theater, where he musically supervised various revues. In 1947 Ziegler was part of the group, with Dora Paulsen that organised a memorial concert of Rosen's music.

After the war he wrote a report for the Canadian authorities. (See below for a translation and description of life in Westerbork Camp.)

In 1948, the Dutch Director, Jaap Speyer gave him the opportunity during the staging of A Kingdom for a House to also compose a film score. It was Erich Ziegler's last work. He died on Christmas Eve 1948 in The Hague.



On December 2, 1942, I was transported to Westerbork. In the beginning I worked in the office and then in the baggage department. On 27.12.42, for the first time, I was asked by my working group to participate as a professional artist at an evening of entertainment given to the camp inmates. This was my Debut in Westerbork. At this time Max Ehrlich was in the camp. Since it felt that a distraction was necessary for the camp inmates, we worked out a common plan to offer our fellow prisoners some evenings that would cheer them up and, on the other hand, to be able to work again in our profession.



This train of thought was greatly supported by the Jewish camp management and succeeded in persuading the German camp commandant to authorize such events. During the preparations for such an entertainment evening came in May 1943 with one of the large transports still a number of other professional artists, such as Willy Rosen and Camilla Spira came to Westerbork. Because of this, the possibility was worked out together with the Jewish self-government to create a temporary blocking possibility for the artists. It was possible to ensure that all those involved in the artistic work were provisionally protected from transport to the east for the Arbeitseinsatz.

Since Willy Rosen's and my special request was for a "revue" as we had already played revues in Scheveningen and Amsterdam, we made the suggestion to put together a revue for the colorful evenings in Westerbork. This proposal was approved.

Since painting, tailoring, and all other factories were represented in the camp, the works necessary for the performance of a revue, such as the decoration and painting etc., could be carried out by the camp inmates. Also in the camp were a number of musicians, some of whom already had a block on their transport and were now due to their cooperation in the Revue gained a temporary suspension.

"Willy Rosen wrote the texts to the revue, the music was made by him and me together, the direction of the review was the group leader of the "Gruppe Bühne", Max Ehrlich."

Willy Rosen wrote the lyrics to the revue, the music was made by him and with us together, the direction of the revue was the group leader of the "group stage", Max Ehrlich, whether.

All the texts had to be submitted to the commander before the beginning of the rehearsals, as well as the music and were examined by him. It often happened that parts failed, or changes were ordered. Since the commander showed an unexpected understanding of our work, the group was temporarily blocked and were also creating a choir and a ballet from Dilletanten Bühne.

In many performances the commander himself was present, otherwise the evenings were supervised by an SS man or a Marechaussee. After the first revue in Westerbork was a success, it was arranged that further revues should be rehearsed and performed, which was done.

Through the personal involvement of the commander before rehearsals, and at the dress rehearsal, giving his instructions directly to the artists, and through his frequent unexpected appearance at the rehearsals, the artists came into close contact with him. The constant control also made the artistic work difficult in every respect, but nevertheless managed to keep the performance at a high level.

The evacuation transports in September 1944 put an end to our work, since almost all members of the group stage had to go on transport to Theresienstadt. '

## Ziegler as Composer

1920 Die Spieluhr: "Es hatte die reizende Herzogin"

"Cherry Tree Foxtrot"

Chansons

- Die arme Bohemienne: "Heut' Sekt in Strömen"
- English Lady: "Fern vom Themsestrande"
- Kauft Blumen: "In der vorstadt im Blumenladen"
- Mazurka : "Im schlosse herrscht rastloses Toben"
- Mein Jonny: "Jonny was 'ne Tanzkanone"
- Die rote' Niece: "In eine Kneipe"
- Ein Walzer durch's Leben: "In Grinzing ein Ball", Wienerwalzer
- Eine tolle Nacht: "In einer Bar eine Tolle Nacht"

Aida-Rag.

Cherry Tree. Foxtrott

La Jolie. Boston.

1922 Stoßt an, füllt die Becher, es lebe der Rhein! — Lied [Marsch] (Erich Ziegler)

Shimmy Fieber

Wir lachen u. wenn uns das Herz auch zerspringt.

Sag will du mein Verhältnis sein? Onestep

1923 Hawaiian song: Hoerst du nicht die Hawaiian songs?

Bonboniere. Foxtrott

Es ist noch keine Kunst, die Frauen zu verführen

Man gibt sein Herz und bekommt einen Veilchenstrauß (Erich Ziegler)

1924 Bei einem Glaserl Wein

1925 Cafe Chantant am Boulevard 1925

Rum um die Welt. Daraus: - Ich hab ein Schlafcoupe

O Frühlingsleit.

Robben Shimmy.

Rum um die Welt.

Wenn die Spatzen von den Giebeln.

Wiegenlied.

Zeppelinmarsch.

1926 Am Rüdesheimer Schloß steht eine Linde — Foxtrot

1927 Wann werden wir uns wiederseh'n? — Slow Foxtrot

Nur du bist meine Welt! — Slow Foxtrot

1928 Von dem Zoo bis zu den Linden. Marschlied

Still die Tränen mein Kind (Do stop crying my dear).

Alles für euch - Marsch

1931 Liebe mich. Revue. Daraus: Liebe mich



#### Participation in Revues

Alles OK	1937
Alles voor U	1938
Allotria	1938
Appel Appel	1943 Westerbork

Auf der Heide		1943	Westerbork
Bravo da Capo	(3)	1943	Westerbork
Bunter Abend	(5)	1943	Westerbork
Carnaval		1942	
Das Kabarett der Komiker		1943	
Het klopt		1941	
Hij en Zij		1941	
Humor und Melodie		1941	
Humor und Melodie (2)		1943	Westerbork
Komt en Lacht		1940	
Laatste-Nieuws!		1938	
Lache Bajazzo		1940	
Lachsanatorium		1941	
Lutine Gold		1938	
Melodie des Lachens		1939	
Schevingen Lacht		1939	
Tempo! Tempo!		1941	
Tot Weerziens		1941	
Total Verruckt	(6)	1944	Westerbork
Vroolijk Afscheid		1941	