

# The Blues in Divided Germany: 1945-1990

## Prologue: The American Roots

In the aftermath of World War II, Germany lay in ruins, both physically and culturally. The once-vibrant music scene had been decimated, and the German people were searching for new forms of expression. Enter the blues: a genre of music that had originated in the American South and that would soon find a home in divided Germany.



## One Sound, Two Worlds: The Blues in a Divided Germany, 1945-1990 by William Bay

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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American soldiers stationed in Germany brought their blues records with them, and they often played them for German civilians. The music's raw energy and emotional depth resonated with the Germans, who were drawn to its soulful melodies and poignant lyrics.

### **The Blues in West Germany**

In West Germany, the blues scene flourished in the 1950s and 1960s. German musicians such as Alexis Korner, Manfred Mann, and Peter Green formed their own blues bands, and they toured extensively throughout the country. The blues became a symbol of youth culture and rebellion, and it

played a significant role in the development of rock and roll in West Germany.



Alexis Korner was one of the most influential blues musicians in West Germany.

West German blues musicians were heavily influenced by American blues artists such as Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, and B.B. King. They adopted

the traditional blues forms and instrumentation, but they also incorporated elements of jazz and rock into their music.

The blues scene in West Germany was centered in cities such as Hamburg, Berlin, and Munich. These cities were home to numerous blues clubs and venues, and they hosted many international blues artists.

### **The Blues in East Germany**

In East Germany, the blues scene was much more restricted. The communist government viewed the blues as a decadent Western import, and it did not allow it to be played on state-controlled radio and television. However, there was a small but dedicated underground blues scene in East Germany.



East German blues musicians such as Jürgen Kerth and Hansi Biebl played in private homes and cellar clubs, and they recorded their music on homemade tapes. They were influenced by American blues artists, but they also developed their own unique style that incorporated elements of Eastern European folk music.

The blues scene in East Germany was often suppressed by the government, but it never died out completely. In the 1980s, as the communist government began to loosen its grip on the country, the blues scene began to flourish.

### **The Blues and German Unification**

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the reunification of Germany in 1990 had a profound impact on the blues scene in Germany. The East German blues scene was finally able to emerge from the shadows, and East and West German blues musicians began to collaborate.



After German unification, the blues scene flourished.

In the years since reunification, the blues scene in Germany has continued to grow and evolve. German blues musicians have achieved international recognition, and the country is now home to some of the best blues festivals in Europe.

The blues has played a significant role in German music since the end of World War II. It has been a source of inspiration for German musicians, and it has helped to shape the country's cultural identity. The blues is a testament to the power of music to transcend borders and to bring people together.

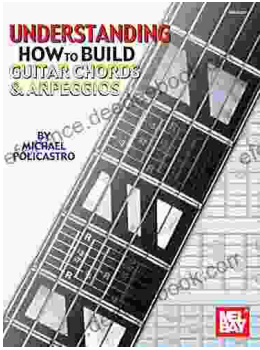


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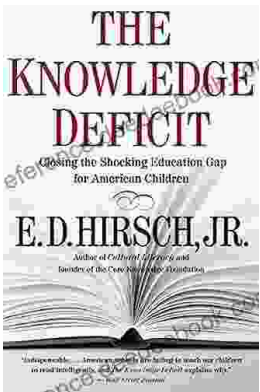
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