

## 1. MUSIC, CULTURE AND SOCIETY – A DECADE-BY-DECADE OVERVIEW

“This is Swedish music – not peculiarly stimulating, not surprising, but original as if reflecting a profound and genuine national disposition. For there is a Swedish music, incommensurable with the rest of European musical art, a music yet underrated, disdained, indeed even unknown, while no one measures her against the one natural yardstick: the Swedish temperament. One measures her against the music of Germany, France and Italy, with everything that has been and is successful in the world and – therefore cannot understand, cannot believe in her.” (Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, in a review of Ludvig Norman’s A major sextet in *Dagens Nyheter* 16/2, 1900).

For Sweden, the 18<sup>th</sup> century was an era in which the country emerged from its relative cultural isolation. It developed its trade, architecture, literature, science, furniture design, linguistic knowledge – and music – in an ever closer, ever livelier and ever broader contact with the continent. To a large extent, this entailed grafting an imported culture onto the Swedish rootstock, but it was a transplantation that was a necessary part of the great cultivation process.

With the 19<sup>th</sup> century comes a new phase in this process as a national Swedish characteristic begins to emerge from the European soil. Not only was the European cultural import treated increasingly like a natural part of Sweden’s own culture, but there were also currents that sought to nurture “genuine” and “national” attributes by, in part, tying them to the folk, Norse and perhaps barbarian grain that was disappearing under the European varnish. This ambition of a “national identity”, a peculiarly Swedish culture, initially only concerned a small stratum of society, but gradually became an important ingredient of Swedish cultural life. What started as archival and ethnological interests ended up as national, imperialistic or chauvinistic sentiments.

The history is naturally more complicated than this. Nevertheless, in this volume we intend to describe music in Sweden between 1810 and 1920 in terms of how it fits into the contemporary ideological terrain of idealism, patriotism, Geatism, nationalism, and traditionalism – and not least with a view to the endeavours made to imbue it with a sense of national identity.

### ***The 1810s***

After the loss of Finland and the union with Norway, efforts to construct a narrative of national identity took on many guises. One was royalism, with its adherents rallying around the monarch as a symbol of national unity and prosperity. Another was Geatism, a literary movement that sought to draw fresh impetus from the nation’s historical roots and former glories. A third was folklore-ism, the educated class’s fascination for peasant life and art. Partly – but not fully – these trends coincided with the romantic movement, which mainly concerned itself with exploring the universe of the psyche and imagination and then mapping it out with all the tools at literature’s disposal. But romanticism as an artistic genre infiltrated the other arts, especially music. Here it can be described as a break with the balanced formal perfection of classicism. Romantic music upsets this balance, albeit in the service of expression and psychological depth.

In the early 1800s Swedish society was hierarchical and patriarchal. It comprised a representative publicness that apart from members of the actual nobility also incorporated the other controlling social elite, altogether a tiny fraction of the population. The fact that most of the higher offices were held by noblemen was severally reflected in music. The only professional orchestra in the country was the Royal Court Orchestra (*Hovkapellet*), which operated under the auspices of the Royal Opera (*Kunliga teatern*) and its aristocratic director, and which was largely financed from the King’s own coffers. Regimental music,

too, was a matter of interest for the aristocratic officer class, who established a special musical fund for the purpose. In Stockholm, the major concerts were held in the House of Nobility (*Riddarhuset*) and with the assistance of the Royal Court Orchestra. The nobility was the backbone of concerts and comic operas as well as the seasonal balls, in particular the annual representation balls at court and those held by the dance orders, the Karlberg military academy, or by provincial governors and mayors. The prevailing cultural pattern was based on a strict code of “noble” conduct, with the estate’s insignia, customs, gestures and rhetoric as the norm. The aristocracy was overwhelmingly international in orientation and tended to regard patriotism as the domain of the military and middle class.

The Royal Opera held a plethora of representative performances to mark the political events of the time. For instance, the Swedo-Russian war of 1808–09 separated Finland for ever more from the kingdom of Sweden. This led to the enforced abdication of Gustav IV Adolf and the crowning of his uncle in his stead (Karl XIII), whose infirmity obliged the Riksdag of the Estates, convened in Örebro in 1810, to elect the French marshal Bernadotte as his successor under the name Karl Johan. Even as crown prince, he proved of great significance to Swedish politics, breaking as he did with Napoleon and securing England’s support for his claim on Norway, which proclaimed its own constitution on 17 May 1814. However, on 4 November that same year the country was forced into a union with Sweden, an occasion that was celebrated at the Royal Opera with a play entitled *Föreningen* (the Union).

In 1818, a large funeral cantata for Karl XIII and a homage play under the name *Balder* for Karl XIV Johan were performed, both composed by the Chief Conductor of the Royal Court Orchestra Edouard Du Puy, one of the many immigrant musicians of the time. *Balder* was more than just a royal paean, however; an “allegorical divertissement of song and dance in one act”, it gives proof in its first half of the new Norse-Geatish movement, and foreshadows in its second half, with its polskas and folk songs, the folklorism of later decades. The folk element of both plays was, in its own way, an expression of the greater citizen freedoms and rights enshrined in the new constitution of 1809. Press freedoms were introduced, although they were soon limited by the *indragningsmakten* of 1812 (whereby the state reserved the right to withdraw publication and circulation rights for certain newspapers and journals), which remained in force until Karl Johan’s death in 1844.

The Geatish Society (founded in 1811) was a politically fairly conservative, academic literary body that declared kinship with the uncorrupted folk and that glorified manly vigour and the significance of the nation’s Norse heritage. It was very much the Geatish philosophy that lay behind “the discovery of folk music” – the nascent interest in archaeology and folklorism, and in Sweden’s folk music heritage, to which the first major contributions were made by Geatish Society “brothers” Erik Gustaf Geijer and Arvid August Afzelius, with Johann Christian Friedrich Hæffner their musical arranger. Their *Svenska folkvisor från forntiden* (1814–18), along with Olof Åhlström’s *Traditioner af svenska folk-dansar* (1814–15), forms the source of our knowledge of Swedish folk music. While such Geatish-folklorist interests were confined then to academic circles, patriotic sentiments were far more widespread and fomented by the political events and the writings of Esaias Tegnér.

The affluent middle class had still not acquired the musical habits of the nobility to any great extent. In 1815, Secretary of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music Pehr Frigel painted a rather gloomy picture of musical cultivation of the time. Seen from his more professional vantage point, music was a mere fad, a superficial need, an ephemeral distraction: “the music lover’s” ambition, he wrote, extended no further than

“being able to pick out some operetta overtures, waltzes or polonaises on the piano, render passages on a violin with cavalier bravado, and sing a few drinking songs, or at best some little aria tunes.” (After Morales and Norlind 1921, p. 78).

Nonetheless, there was at this time a small strata of musically “cultivated” people who in contemporary terminology fell into the categories of “artists”, “connoisseurs” and “music lovers” (from the German *Künstler*, *Kenner* and *Liebhaber*) – roughly equivalent to professional musicians, experienced and discerning musical amateurs and amateur musicians. We find the “connoisseur”, who cultivates music at home with like-minded others, not just in the capital but here and there amongst the provincial nobles and merchants, managing directors, military officers and industrialists. Classic examples are Mrs Kristina af Geijerstam in Närke and Captain Bengt Gustaf Rappholt in Värmland, who supervised E.G. Geijer’s musical studies. Geijer was also himself a “connoisseur” and dedicated to both his mentors a piano sonata during his studies in England in 1810 as the first of a far from insignificant compositional oeuvre. In London he attended concerts, including Handel’s *Messiah* – “without comparison the most sublime of music works that has ever delighted my soul and my ear” (Geijer, letter 27/2 1810; cit. after Schück 1920).

The general level of music cultivation is also evident in the appearance of public concerts, which combined the most noble of art music with superficial, ideally sensationalist virtuoso pieces. Symphonies, solo concertos and sonatas are broken up by the interspersing of arias, variation pieces or whatnot between the movements – assuming, that is, that all the movements are played. The concert arrangers were often bent on drawing applause with demonstrations of dazzling virtuosity or sensational artifice, an international streak that lived on longer in Sweden than in many other countries. On the continent, it manifested itself in the virtuoso solo concertos – including Viotti’s 29 violin concertos and Rode’s 24 violin caprices. Swedish emulators were Du Puy with his violin and bassoon concertos and Bernhard Crusell with his three clarinet concertos and a triple concerto for horn, bassoon and clarinet.

These works adhered to the classical framework – albeit in its French elegant-virtuoso form, to which musical audiences of the 1810s had become accustomed – as devised by Haydn and Glück in Vienna, Dalayrac and Viotti in Paris. For us, Mozart, early Beethoven, Cherubini and Méhul are also classicists, but for the audiences of the time this was not unequivocally the case. When Geijer attended Mozart’s *Requiem* in 1805 in Stockholm, he heard not the balanced classicist but the cross-boundary romanticist Mozart – “an unseen ocean of majestic harmonies...people will dread” (letter 9/3 1805; cit. after Schück 1920). And when *Don Giovanni* was staged in Stockholm in 1813, the classical connoisseurs declared that the opera was incommensurate with their aesthetics – somewhat provoked perhaps by Du Puy’s newly composed concluding Hell scene, the powerful expressiveness of which transgressed the rules of classical restraint. But for the romantic aesthetic, it was necessary for doing justice to the powerful emotions and shadowy sides of human nature.

### ***The 1820s***

Gradually, an industrial nation started to emerge from the agricultural. The engineering company Motala Verkstad was established (1822) and later the Technological Institute in Stockholm (1827, later to become the Royal Institute of Technology) and Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg (1829) to oversee the relevant education.

A key figure in this regard was the English Methodist Samuel Owen, who manufactured threshers for farmers and steam boats for passengers in factories on Kungsholmen in Stockholm. By as early as 1825 he was offering passage on his five steam vessels “Josephine” (after the crown princess), “Stockholm”, “Upsala” (due to the dominance of Mälartrafiken, which had regular sailings on the Stockholm-Uppsala route) and “Föreningen” (after the Swedish-Norwegian union). Up until the advent of the railways after the middle of the century (see below), boat travel was the most comfortable means of conveyance,

compared to the alternatives, namely the stagecoach or horse-drawn cart. The grand Göta Canal project between the eastern and western seas was also underway at this time, reaching completion in 1832. Such improved communications gave greater mobility to musicians travelling from Stockholm to the provinces and stimulated an influx of artists visiting from abroad.

While the cities' still rather slowly growing population was held in check by guild regulations, more and more voices were being raised in favour of greater trade freedoms and against the outdated Riksdag of the estates, with its division into nobles, clergy, burghers and peasants. Granted, the Riksdag decided to extend representation (e.g. to academics and industrialists) in 1823 but much remained to be done. That Sweden was still an agricultural country is clear from *Tabellverket's* population statistics (af Forsell 1833), which give a population in 1825 of 2,771,300, only 10% of whom lived in towns and cities. Stockholm had only 79,500 inhabitants, with soldiers, government officials and labourers the dominant professional categories (in descending order of size). Gothenburg came next with 26,700 (soldiers, mariners, merchants), then Karlskrona with 11,900 (soldiers, merchants, government officials), Norrköping with 9,700 (labourers, merchants, mariners), Malmö with 8,100 (soldiers, merchants, educationalists), Gävle with 7,400 (mariners, labourers, merchants) and Kalmar with 5,000 (mariners, merchants, labourers). Uppsala, Visby, Falun, Jönköping, Kristianstad, Lund and Örebro each had a population of some 4,000.

Increasing urban prosperity enabled middle class families to purchase musical instruments (pianofortes, guitars, string instruments, flutes and harps) and printed music. At this time, most music was played in the home. People would take lessons in singing and playing technique with available musicians and take to singing the most recent songs, arias and duets, and playing variation pieces, fantasies, opera arrangements and sonatas. The music was overwhelmingly French, German or Italian; Swedish production in these areas was still insignificant.

Domestic music became all the rage in wealthy homes and salons, where women were given a rare opportunity to develop their talents. Musicianship up to professional level was *comme il faut*, provided it was exhibited within the confines of the salon. Famous names in society included Brita Catharina Munck af Rosenschöld, wife of Professor Lidbeck in Lund and student of singing master Craelius in Stockholm. From Germany there came Caroline Kolbe, later Ridderstolpe, and from Italy Mathilda d'Orozco, later Montgomery (then Gyllenhaal), both of whom were successful singers and song composers. The latter drew particular admiration for her voice, her strong character and her settings of Tegnér's poetry (e.g. *Axels monolog*, 1826), which competed with Crusell's (*Frithiof's saga*, 1826). Violinist Lovisa Charlotta Borgman also performed in public in the 1820s before marrying Stockholm mayor-to-be Johan Anders Biörck, himself a cellist and a keen host of musical soirees in his home.

A tendency at the time was for such amateurs to gather in order to perform large works for choir and orchestra: "musical societies" started to emerge around the country – not uncommonly modelling themselves on the Harmonic Society in Stockholm (founded in 1820). Everywhere, Haydn's *Creation* oratorio was a particular favourite for the ultimate ambition of such musical endeavours.

### ***The 1830s***

Over the previous decade, journals such as *Heimdall*, *Nya Extra Posten*, *Konstvännen* and *Athenaeum* had started to dedicate much more space to the music scene than the older press had done. To be sure, reviews of public performances had appeared in Stockholm's newspapers since the 1770s, but operas and public concerts were now being critiqued both

more often and more thoroughly. Also in the 1820s, journals devoted purely to music started to appear, one of which was *Läsning uti Musikaliska Ämmen*, which is stronger proof than anything that music was now settling into a prominent place in people's daily lives.

December 1830 saw the first issue of Lars Johan Hierta's newspaper *Aftonbladet*, heralding a new type of liberal-spirited journalism. Other newspapers in this spirit were *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts Tidning* (founded in 1832) and *Östgöta Correspondenten* (founded in 1838). These oppositional newspapers were the frequent victims of censorship (under the powers of *indragningmakten*) but always bounced back – in 1838, *Aftonbladet* had reached its twentieth incarnation. In that same year Geijer effected his sensational defection from conservatism to liberalism with the emotionally lyrical song *Ensam i bräcklig farkost*.

The time of transition between the older “representative public sphere” and a more modern “bourgeois public sphere” (Habermas 1984) occurred in Sweden between 1830 and 1850, a time that has also been called “the transformational society” (Melberg 1978), with its principle of “salon publicness”. On the one hand there was a conservative “administrative” middle class which was in keeping with the older, aristocratic social order, and on the other, an oppositional liberal “intermediary” middle class, which structured society along new principle lines. The core of this public that acted as intermediary for the bourgeois public sphere consisted of educated professionals close to the state, such as government officials, lawyers, doctors, priests, officers and university lecturers as well as financiers, publishers and manufactures.

For this entire class, the home and the salon were extremely important, for it was here that the individual could cultivate his or her emotions, religion and morals. The three phases of publicness – representative, salon and bourgeois – can be studied in the development of the musical salon from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century aristocratic salon, through the bourgeois salon in (above all) the 1830s and 40s, to the later 1800s public “salon” in the shape of music societies.

It was also in the bourgeois salon that romanticism and realism started to interbreed, particularly in the world of fiction. A streak of realism can be already seen in Sophie von Knorring's novels and in titles such as Fredrika Bremer's *Teckningar utur hvardagslifvet*. Carl Jonas Love Almquist alternated between emotively romantic descriptions and an equally robust element of realism or social critique. In 1839, as a journalist and critic, he penned a polemic in *Dagligt Allehanda* attacking virtuosity and “charlatanry” in music, his barb no doubt aimed at violinist Ole Bull, who visited Sweden in 1838, and at the current craze of Rossini-ism.

His praise he reserved instead for the simple and rustic, which he considered the original and genuine in romantic spirit. In his attack on “harmonistics” and “instrumentality”, that is to say musically sophisticated techniques such as polyphony, variational artistry, virtuoso mastery, timbral refinement, formal intricacy – in a word that which is “difficult” and “requires much hard work to learn” – he gives expression to the romantic aesthetic. “Again, that which is essential, the devising of a pretty tune, must be infinitely easy for he whom God and nature have deigned to endow with such [talents].” For this aesthetic, which seeks to access the music of the “harmonistically” uncorrupted soul, much not only of the classical tradition but also, indeed, of so-called romantic music is “charlatanry”. Almquist demonstrated his desires through small literary-musical scenes, which he had performed in Malla Silfverstolpe's Uppsala salon and that were later included in *Törnrosens bok* under the title *Songes* (“dreams”), a collection of simple songs and choral pieces, many of which are folkish in tone.

In 1838, Almqvist published his observations on the “meaning of Swedish poverty”, a phenomenon that he felt, approvingly, had shaped the Swedish disposition. The ability to be poor had made the Swede free and unworldly, indifferent and unconcerned towards property and prosperity. At any time he could rise, unburdened, and go boldly forth. “At such moments he feels God within him and the whole world beneath him”. The lowly Swede left to his own devices, resourceful, quick, independent and steadfast in the face of adversity, was part of what fashioned and sustained the national identity. There was nothing in music more pertinent than to vaunt the folk song, which was thought to have sprung from Nordic and Geatish naturalness and naivety – as opposed to alien modern artificial sentimentality.

Influenced in part by poet-musician Almqvist, Adolf Fredrik Lindblad and Geijer also started to compose songs to their own lyrics. Lindblad is primarily known as one of the foremost song composers of 19<sup>th</sup> century Sweden, and his melodious *En sommardag* or the picturesque *Skutsgossen* are still occasionally played to this day. And yet he arrived at the song epoch of his life quite late. His first proper collection was printed in 1836 when he was 35. But it placed him immediately at the forefront of contemporary song composers, on account not only of his musical merits but also of his ability to create a genuinely Swedish species of song with connections to the literary circles surrounding Geijer.

In the eleven years from 1834 to 1845 Geijer and Lindblad composed and published arguably the strangest group of songs that had ever seen the light of day in Sweden – from which we may conclude that Geijer did not start composing songs in earnest until the age of 51. Together, they created small rustic tableaux, impressions of nature and personal effusions, all the time avoiding the conventions that overly dominated Swedish song compositions (Boman, Nordblom, Bauck). Moreover, and no less importantly, it is likely that neither of them could be classified by Almqvist as a “harmonist” or “fugueist”. Over the ensuing decade, this poet-musician tradition was carried on by Jacob Axel Josephson and Gunnar Wennerberg.

### ***The 1840s***

At the 1840-41 Riksdag, which was facing unprecedentedly vehement political opposition, the Committee on the Constitution presented a list of 31 accusations against the government (two of which concerned the running of the Royal Opera):

“His Majesty’s Government suffers a shortcoming, fit to arouse the greatest public resentment, as causes the dissolution of the Constitution and maintains the reprehensible, biased, incorrigible, ignorant, irresponsible and hereditary aristocratic rule that, in recent times, has earned the epithet ‘bedchamber government’.” (J.T. Petre, *The estate of the burghers*; after Lindorm 1917, p. 205).

A raft of reforms was decided by the Riksdag, including of the municipal duty to defray the cost of public elementary teaching. It also discussed commercial freedoms, which led to the abolition of the guild system in 1846. The former compulsory apprentice-journeyman-master organisation of professional development was deemed to only protect old privileges and stifle new enterprises and new ideas. In 1844 Geijer announced in Uppsala that “the principle of association is an expedient of its time” and is “that which in our times has broken the bonds of the corporations” (after Jansson 1985, p. 23). The associations were a new kind of voluntary vehicle for cooperation for one reason or other. It was not only the companies that benefited from the commercial and trade freedom law (1846-64) but also new movements in the religious (internal missions and non-conformism), cultivation and education fields as well as organisations that promoted teetotalism and national defence.

Characteristic for these associations is that they were set up at the initiative of the upper class, even if their aim was to help workers and the public at large – unlike the later model of association of the 1870s, which looked after specific group interests. It is typical that when the Swedish Temperance Society was established (1837), then ecclesiastical minister August

von Hartmansdorff was its leader. Its activities, which were more directed at moderation than at teetotalism, were often conducted in tandem with the priesthood and *Svenska Missionsförbundet* (the Swedish Mission Society) (founded in 1835). The consumers' cooperative began in Örsundsbro in Uppland under County Governor Robert von Kraemer in 1850, the same year that *Stockholms Arbetarförening* (the Stockholm Working Men's Club) was set up by the radical Court of Appeal notary Franz Sjöberg. Their connections are not as strange as might appear at first sight. The associations were precisely the kind of body that by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century appeared as a natural solution to the social woes of the day and that could unite "workers" – which by now included craftsmen, foremen and lower non-manual workers – and the pro-reform, liberal strata of the "upper class".

In these associations and societies music played an important role as regards cultivation, moral edification and pleasure. Male choirs were especially nurtured in *Stockholms Bildningscirkel* (Stockholm's Educational Circle, founded in 1845) and its successors around the country. And the *Topografiska Föreningen i Stockholm* (Stockholm Typographical Association) was formed just months after its choir had started rehearsals under August Jahnke (1846). Jahnke also founded *Folksångföreningen* (Folk Song Association) men's choir (1847), where the word "folk" denotes different kinds of people united in song. In this same spirit, numerous choirs and wind orchestras were established within the burgeoning folk movements.

A general liberal discontent with the old king Karl Johan was offset by public confidence in Crown Prince Oscar, who displayed liberal tendencies, published a tract (anonymously) on the improvement of the "penal institutions" (1840) and held discussions with his political opponents. He was also passionate about the arts and was an accomplished amateur composer of songs, marches and the like, and of half the opera *Ryno*, which Eduard Brendler had left uncompleted in 1831. When Oscar entered parliament for the first time as King in 1844, "folk songs" (songs of homage to the King) were written and composed in terms that would have been inconceivable under Karl Johan's later reign. In Uppsala, the young Wennerberg wrote the "Oscar Hymn" *Bjöd så i Thule*, while in Lund there was *Ur svenska hjärtans djup* (O. Lindblad–C.V.A. Strandberg; both for men's choir. In the second stanza can be detected the sometime anti-royalist author C.V.A. Strandberg's folk-elevating attitude: "O Konung! Folkets Majestät! / är äfven Ditt: beskärma det / och värna det från fall!" (O King! The people's Majesty / is also Yours: Safeguard it / and protect it from ruin!)

Oscar I put wind in the sails of the Scandinavian movement, which had initially stemmed from the famous laurelling of Tegnér in Lund Cathedral in 1829 by Adam Oehlenschläger – Danish poet and source of (old) Nordic inspiration. The series of Lund-Copenhagen student meetings began in 1839, and with the Lund student choruses under the direction of Otto Lindblad, they became fraternal parties in a Nordic-Scandinavian spirit marching under the banners of "Nordic unity" and "Nordic liberty".

The Uppsala students affiliated themselves with Scandinavianism with a Scandinavian student meeting in the city in 1843. (Student singing there has, however, a much older history dating back to 1808, when the newly appointed *director musices* Hæffner started to supply student recruits with marching songs). As part of the necessary preparations – this was in the era of the associations – student songs were organised under the *Allmänna Sångföreningen* male choir (1842), a name that was soon adopted by a plethora of singing associations around the country. In 1845, the Uppsala students travelled for the first time to Lund and Copenhagen, where their Norwegian peers also joined the movement. (The Finns, whose liberation from the Russian Tsardom was often a subject of the student meeting speeches and songs, were not able to join, however, until the student meeting in Uppsala in 1875).

A test of Scandinavianism resolve came in the shape of the 1848 Danish-German war, when promises of mutual aid were confined to a handful of volunteers. Although political

Scandinavianism faded, the student meeting in Uppsala in 1856 was still a magnificent apogee – even for student song – and marked a transition from the Scandinavian rhetoric to a more pragmatic spirit of Nordic collaboration.

Student singing came to encompass different types of song, adapted to different sides of contemporary ideas and lifeways, that were spread from the academies to the rest of society. The fact that Uppsala and Lund played such a seminal part in this repertoire and that it took the form of male quartets and a cappella men's choirs is due naturally to the specificities of the student environment, where neo-romantically tinted patriotic sensibilities flourished, and where, especially in the 1840s, people considered themselves the appointed champions of honour, fatherland and Nordic fraternity. This was expressed particularly strongly in *Stå stark, du ljusets riddarvakt* (Wennerberg-Nybohm; 1848) and, a few years later, in Prince Gustaf's bright and optimistic *Sjung om studentens lyckliga dag* (lyrics by Säterberg; 1852).

But student singing was not always so stringent and was happy to adopt themes of folk song, nature and love, as in Otto Lindblad's arrangement for male choir of *Näckens polska* ("Djuft i havet på demantehällen"), a traditional melody with words by A. A. Afzelius (pr. *Iduna* 1812). Such songs were popular as serenades to be sung outside the windows of sweethearts.

There is a point of contact here with folklorist Richard Dybeck, who from 1844 sought to spread knowledge of folk songs and folk tunes at his "evening entertainments" in Stockholm. He also used four-part arrangements of these melodies. He is most famous for *Du gamla, du friska*, which was presumably originally conceived as a *naturlyrisk* paean to the Nordic countries set to a folk melody – there is, after all, no trace of belligerent patriotism. Eventually, however, it became an unofficial national anthem, complete with pathos and weighty accompaniment.

Another genre of student song is the lusty, happy and humorous Bellman-inspired number (see vol. II), which were traditionally solo-sung, narrative and whimsical in mood. But now they were arranged – in an appropriate selection – for male choir, and soon earned a central place in the repertoire. When a small singing society was formed by students in Uppsala in 1853, it adopted, symptomatically enough, the name Orphei dränger (after the first line of Bellman's *Fredmans epistle* no. 14). This repertoire also includes drinking songs and other kinds of drawing-room ballads. Wennerberg contributed cheerful trios (*De tre*, 1847) and dialogising duets, depicting student life in musical quotes from contemporary comic operas (*Gluntarne*, 1847-50).

It is during this decade that Franz Berwald composed the bulk of his instrumental music. Some works were performed at a concert at the Royal Opera in 1843, but the critiques of *Sinfonie sérieuse*, amongst other pieces, were damning and it was not until the 1890s that Berwald earned his rightful place in Swedish concert halls. Audiences preferred to hear theatre plays with musical accompaniment, and it is the expansion of this sector that dominates the 1840s and 50s.

In Stockholm, the Royal Opera enjoyed exclusive control and allowed only a summer theatre on the grounds of Djugården. A campaign to break the theatre monopoly had been initiated in the previous decade by journalist and captain Anders Lindeberg, who wanted to establish a new theatre alongside the opera. Following a death sentence for lese-majesty and a subsequent amnesty, he was able to build his New Theatre (*Nya Teatern*) in 1842 and start competing with the royal, heavily indebted, stage. August Blanche's debut at this theatre came with *Positivhataren* (1843) – a playful allusion to the city's itinerant organ grinders (the *positivhalaren*, the pun being between *halare* (puller) and *hatare* (hater)). On 1 January 1845 a performance of Blanche's *1844-1845* was the first ever Swedish New Year revue. Blanche introduced a new tone to Swedish theatre, one that while often humorous, was also charged with realism and social comment. He had a passion for music and made generous room for



musical interludes and songs in most of his plays. Most important in this regard was Jacob Niclas Ahlström, who directed the modest theatre orchestra and composed most of its music.

In emulation of Blanche, many vaudeville writers were already starting to embellish their plays with songs. Best known to posterity is Fredrik August Dahlgren with his *Värmlänningarna* (1846), a “tragi-comic drama in speech, song and dance” in a rural setting, this time with music arranged by Court Orchestra violinist Andreas Randel.

Over the decade, comic opera and vaudeville – plays with songs sung to borrowed tunes – became an increasingly widespread and popular genre at Sweden’s theatres. This was to the credit not only of the touring theatre companies and the theatres that came in their wake, but also of the gradually rising social standing of the theatres themselves. This, in turn, is concomitant with the growth and rising prosperity of the middle class and its perception of the theatre as the most superior form of public entertainment. It is also relevant that vaudeville plots also played out in bourgeois environments.

### ***The 1850s***

The decades around the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century were marked by unprecedented optimism and expectations of progress. Industrialism was flaunted at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851 – with Swedish medals for rolled iron, razors and stearin candles. Gas lighting was installed on the streets of Stockholm (at the Royal Opera in 1854), electric telegraph lines were built – the first being between Stockholm and Uppsala (1853), the postal service was modernised and stamps introduced (1855). In 1856 came the laying of the railways, with the Stockholm-Gothenburg line opening in 1862, cutting travelling times from one week by stagecoach to 14 hours. This revolutionised domestic traffic. If coastal towns had once mostly thrived from shipping, another category of inland towns were now springing up along the railway network.

Increasing industrialisation and trade brought strong urban growth, and with it, a deterioration of sanitary conditions. Stockholm’s large death surplus was offset, however, by unceasing migration that pushed its population over 100,000 in 1856 and 130,000 a decade later. Only then were proper measures taken to improve the city’s hygiene standards and to transform what was effectively a shanty town into a modern city with boulevards and parks. The reaction against rising destitution, alcoholism and debauchery came largely from the temperance and non-conformist movements, which were flourishing under liberalisation. For both, music was a vital means of unification.

There were a number of gospel preachers travelling the country, some of whom supplied the Low Church groups with a new repertoire of songs. In 1850, Oscar Ahnfelt, with the financial support of Jenny Lind (who curtailed her opera career for religious reasons), began publishing his *Andeliga sånger* with piano or guitar accompaniment. Of the 60 songs in the five booklets from the 1850s, Ahnfelt had himself composed the melodies to 36 in a style most closely related to the simpler solo songs of the time.

Poised against the “revivalism” *within* the Lutheran church, which manifested itself most notably in the *Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen* (Evangelical Homeland Foundation, founded in 1856), stood the “non-conformist church”, partly in opposition to the High Church’s Lutheran dogma. The Baptists grew strong in the 1850s despite persecution and lawsuits. When the Conventicle Act was rescinded (1858) and the first Dissenter Act was adopted (1860) the situation was eased, enabling brothers Gustaf and Per Palmquist to publish their collection of *Pilgrim-sånger* (1859; music supplement 1860), containing many Anglican revivalist songs with which Gustaf had become acquainted during his years as a preacher in the USA (1851-57).

As society became more liberal, so profane public entertainment expanded. More and more entrepreneurs tried to lure people out of their homes and into establishments and spaces

that attempted to mimic those of society. The garden societies, which made a living selling flowers and fruit trees, laid out parks with special pavilions where the public could go and listen to music – the first in Stockholm (1838) and Gothenburg (1842) and then later in other towns, such as Visby (De Badande Vännerna, 1856) and Linköping (1859). City parks and spas were likewise extended.

Balls became public, or at least semi-public forms of entertainment now that entrepreneurs had begun selling entrance tickets. The capital's "waltz kings" Frans Weller and Anton Schnötzing, with Lanner and Johann Strauss the elder in Vienna as their immediate masters, organised balls, "redoutes" and masquerades, and held popular concerts in restaurants and parks "à la Musard" and "à la Strauss" – with programmes that included an array of waltzes, polkas, character pieces, opera tunes and overtures.

One park, more explicitly geared towards pleasure, was Copenhagen's Tivoli (founded in 1843), which Stockholm copied as Norra Tivoli (1848) on Norrtullsgatan, complete with inn, swings, beer hall, tearoom and orchestra building-cum-dance hall, where Schnötzing put on concerts and dance music, alternating the shows with a regimental band. Djurgården's Tivoli opened in 1850, long outliving Norra Tivoli after its closure in 1857.

The number of theatres grew in Stockholm during the decade in order to cater for a seemingly insatiable thirst for, above all, comedies, farces, vaudeville and comic operas: there was Humlegårdsteatern, Davidsons norra paviljong (in the Garden Society), Södra teatern and Ladugårdslandsteatern. Gothenburg also received a new theatre in 1859, albeit without an ensemble. As before – and as in the provinces in general – it hosted touring theatre companies.

At the same time, Blanche was using *Illustrated Tidning* to wage a veritable campaign against the musical establishment, particularly the Royal Academy of Music, the Royal Opera and the Royal Court Orchestra, whose predilection for everything German he believed to be stunting opportunities for Swedes to pursue musical careers. Above all, the large-scale import of musicians was due to the lack of higher music education in Sweden.

Prior to 1858 there was no regular teaching in composition in the country, which impelled Sweden's promising young composers to leave for the continent. Previously, only a few hopefuls had taken this step (including Crusell, A.F. Lindblad and Randel, as well as the immigrant Eggert, Du Puy, Hæffner, Foroni and others); now, however, more and more sought a thorough musical education, and the best opportunities for this were available at institutions such as Mendelssohn's music conservatory in Leipzig (1843), which also boasted a highly developed musical scene. A good many Swedish composers-to-be travelled here in the 1840s and 50s, most notably J.A. Josephson, later *director musices* in Uppsala; Ludvig Norman, who became chief conductor of the Royal Court Orchestra; August Söderman, musical director and choirmaster at the Royal Opera; and Albert Rubenson, who became director of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Stockholm.

All this helped to gradually raise the level of professionalism in Swedish music and composition, particularly of the larger formats. In 1858 and 1859, Rubenson, Norman and dramatist/playwright Frans Hedberg published *Tidning för Theater och Musik*, for which Rubenson penned a polemic on "Native music and dilettantism". Geijer and Wennerberg were ranked as quasi-artists who were to blame for the fact "that we do not possess a genuinely native, Swedish music". The reason for this assault on these revered song composers is that Rubenson was primarily referring to instrumental music – string quartets and symphonies – which were the most important subjects in the compositional teaching done in Leipzig.

The Leipzig phalanx also wanted to reform the nature of the concert, to forego the hitherto prevailing type that offered a mishmash of styles, popular and serious, vocal and instrumental, virtuosos and folkish. To be sure, they had something for everyone, but less for

each particular taste. Now Rubenson and the others wanted to concentrate more on the serious concert that would give audiences a deeper understanding of the great musical works. Such concerts had, little by little, already started to appear around the country. In the 1850s, Randel arranged string quartet soirees in several towns, August Meissner likewise in Gothenburg, while the Royal Court Orchestra started to perform symphonies under the direction of Foroni, although such activities did not really pick up until the following decade.

### ***The 1860s***

A new wave of patriotism and Scandinavianism ensued, fomented in part by political troubles around the world. In Italy, the decade opened with Giuseppe Garibaldi championing the cause of Italian liberty. The North American civil war broke out in 1861 and in 1863 Poland revolted against its Russian occupiers. In Sweden, it was chiefly the liberals who sympathised with these liberation movements, and there arose a widespread desire to reinforce the country's weak defence forces with volunteers. These troops were quickly organised as a "sharpshooter" movement with divisions around the country, Blanche having become its self-appointed paladin in 1860. The "sharpshooter" movement was based on the association principle, with officers and officials in charge, commoners as members and choirs and bands as attractions. Most divisions set up a choir and acquired brass instruments for a band of half a dozen or more men. In Stockholm, Söderman became choirmaster, in Lidköping they sang a "Sharpshooter march" written especially by Wennerberg, then a lecturer in Skara, and in Linköping cathedral organist Jon Fredrik Törnvall arranged the music to the play *Skarpskyttarne före, under och efter striden* (by C. F. Ridderstad; 1862).

Unprecedented musical homage was paid to Karl XII (this was previously done mainly by the students after the centenary in 1818), making the unveiling of his statue in Stockholm in 1868 an occasion to remember, with student choirs and Life Guard bands during the day and three plays on the hero-king in the evening.

The music of the sharpshooter movement was a shot in the arm for association choirs and instrumental ensembles. When the movement died away in the 1870s, the tendency remained for choirs and ensembles to be formed within other social organisations of the popular movement kind and generally in different kinds of association.

Finally, in 1866, came the representation reform when the nobility voted their own estate out of existence, thereby winning "the most difficult of all victories – that over themselves" (Minister of Justice Louis de Geer). In the new bicameral riksdag, the first chamber was dominated by the large landowners and public officials, and the second by peasants. Farming was still the dominant industry, but industrialisation and agricultural efficiency forced many farmers into the cities or across the ocean: between 1860 and 1880 America took in over half a million migrant Swedes.

1865 saw the first major Swedish exhibition of industrial and handicraft products in Malmö, and in 1886 Stockholm hosted the first Scandinavian industrial and art exhibition, where the art was placed in a newly opened National Museum. A particularly notable display of industrial prowess, with national songs and marches, was the unveiling of Molin's cast iron fountain, which stands to this day in Kungsträdgården on the site of the exhibition.

The manifest pursuit of specialisation and professionalism, which broke the focus of previous epochs on versatility and self-subsistence, applied not only to agriculture and industry; the expanding music field also started to demand thorough expert knowledge. In 1856, the Royal Swedish Academy of Music still had only six teachers in its "school", but once the musically interested Prince Oscar (II) became engaged in the activities of the academy and in 1864 became its *preses*, great changes ensued. More subjects were introduced, the period of education was lengthened and the degree requirements were tightened; and in 1870 there were twenty teachers in the "conservatory" as it came to be

called from 1866 onwards. All this was made possible thanks to much more generous government appropriations and private donations. The new subjects included music history and composition, the latter of which was taught for a short while by Norman and Berwald and for a longer time by Hermann Berens.

Ludvig Norman was long valued chiefly for his contributions as chief conductor, musician and organiser, and it is only in recent time that his achievements as a composer have been put under the spotlight. His orchestral and chamber music works place him on a par with Franz Berwald, although his temperament was more romantic. Norman made sure, with the *Gewandhaus* concerts in Leipzig as a model, that especially the Royal Opera's symphony concerts were more homogenous, that is to say with fewer and coherent works and higher demands on artistic quality, with programmes in which the works were carefully balanced so as to offer contrast and mutual support. However, the spirit of virtuosity lived on in different kinds of solo concert, while the more classical line gained ground only gradually under the influence of the likes of Anton Rubenstein and the growing Beethoven cult. The press, such as the fashionably edited *Dagens Nyheter*, served as a channel for reporting musical events.

The 1860s brought an expansion of orchestral music in other ways than just through Norman's concerts. Spa towns and health resorts as well as city parks and garden associations engaged military musicians and other ensembles, while the larger restaurants brought in customer-drawing orchestras, with Berns Salonger going one step further and employing a resident orchestra when it opened on 1 August 1863.

In Gothenburg, Bohemian Joseph Czapek was the driving force behind the city's music scene. Having migrated there in 1847 as the director of a light entertainment ensemble, he went on to attract to the city German cellist August Meissner (subsequently the legendary director of music at Berns) in 1854, and then later the Czech pianist and composer Bedrich Smetana (1856-62). Czapek also organised the Gothenburg Orchestra (1862-66) with a symphonic repertoire – one that was sustained in the following decade by the Gothenburg Music Society under Andreas Hallén.

The Royal Opera had one of its golden ages in the 1860s. It had a musically astute director of music (Eugène von Stedingk), an outstanding artistic director-cum-administrator (the Danish ballet master August Bournonville), a dynamic director of drama (Ludvig Josephson) and an excellent chief conductor (Norman, with Söderman at his side).

For his entire life, August Söderman worked as a theatre conductor, starting his career in the 1850s at Stockholm's Mindre Teater. From 1860 until his death he was choirmaster at the Royal Opera, doubling up as assistant chief conductor from 1862-68. He spent this decade consolidating his position as one of the country's most important and popular composers, and in 1869 travelled to Germany as the very first Jenny Lind scholar. He composed music for some 80 productions, mostly spoken drama and some "operettas". He also drafted six unfinished operas.

It was very common at the time for purely spoken dramas to be supplied with overtures and entr'acte music, and for the play to be embellished with songs to borrowed melodies (the vaudeville technique or with specially composed incidental music, sometimes even both). This practice enjoyed its last, glorious heyday in the 1860s. In 1863, the Royal Opera, which at the time had only one single stage for all sorts of performances, acquired the Mindre Teater. Henceforth, the main stage at the Opera would cater for operas, comic operas and the odd extravagant drama, leaving the Mindre Teater with the smaller plays, with and without song. Here, the theatre composers had the opportunity to create atmospheric musical accompaniments to the plays, music that has largely fallen into oblivion.

The 1860s also saw the breakthrough of French operetta, especially of the Offenbach kind. The opera, of course, offered the grand international opera repertory that included

Gounod's *Faust* (1862), Wagner's *Rienzi* (1865) – the first Wagner opera in Sweden – and Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* (1867), famous for machinist Peter Lindström's sinking ship. Swedish works were also performed, such as Berwald's *Estrella de Soria* (1862) and Hallström's *Hertig Magnus och sjöjungfrun* (1867). This latter, late national romantic work was seminal to the coming decade's three major operas with national fairytale and legend-based motifs: Hallström's *Den bergtagna* (1874) and *Vikingarna* (1877) and Per August Ölander's *Blenda* (1876).

### ***The 1870s***

Technology and industry, banks and building, trade and capital were now becoming an ever-more dominant feature of social development. As professionalism grew and vocational training expanded, the former associations of the 1830s and 40s were superseded by societies set up to look after group interests. The concept of nobility also waned in significance when it came to filling offices, as illustrated by the fact that the opera directors after the retirement of Erik af Edholm (1881) were generally singers and chief conductors.

A pronounced feature of the musical landscape is the sharp rise in Swedish music publication and the particular focus it took. The decade saw an expansion of the music publishing business (mainly through Hirsch, Lundquist and Elkan & Schildknecht) that has barely been surpassed. Collections or volumes of dance music, songs, violin pieces, piano pieces, opera and operetta extracts were printed for the musical homes, and for other burgeoning musical environments a suitable repertoire was made available of works for male choir and mixed choirs, liturgical works, arrangements for wind ensembles and pedagogical works.

One of Abraham Lundquist's greatest successes was *Det sjungande sverige* (1862), a low-price "collection of 100 known and much-loved songs with simplified accompaniment", the fifth edition of which was released in 1874 followed by two collections of an additional 200 songs (1865, 1875). Lundquist had noticed that the demand for easy-to-sing songs for piano had been bolstered by the general affordability of the instrument to the mushrooming middle class, which derived particular pleasure from songs (old and new) and dance music, ideally of the most fashionable kind. There were simple opera arias and songs, operetta couplets, sentimental songs, lieder, songs of homage to freedom and nature, ballads and folk songs. Interestingly, as many as 120 of the 300 songs are Swedish, 20 of them of folk origin. The most frequently represented composers are J. N. Ahlström, Mathilda Montgomery, Prince Gustaf and Geijer, which means that the Swedish repertoire was largely drawn from the 1830s to 1850s, a period which saw the second great wave of newly composed songs (the first was in the 1790s). This repertoire of chiefly simple tunes, sometimes unpretentious in melody and often strophic in structure and lyrically inclined towards nature or light sentimentality, remained – alongside Bellman – a widely popular song repository until the advent of *schlager* (catchy, lightweight songs) and music hall at the turn of the century.

What may be inferred from these and other collections is that domestic musicianship peaked in the 1870s and that the song for piano accompaniment was the most popular genre. The trend continued throughout the following decades, to be sure, but was slowly killed off by the growth in opportunities for diversion outside the home. It also became gradually more accepted for women to participate in public entertainment and events. Up until the 1870s, a woman's (and child's) place was in the home, where the playing of music was to serve as a unifying and inspiring pastime. There was usually a piano at hand amongst the middle class and society, a consequence of the sharp rise in "fortepiano" sales in the 1850s, when new, relatively cheap Swedish-made models were rolled out on the market.

Another nail in the coffin for the older songs was the third wave of new Swedish solo songs, which were more artistic, almost through-composed imitations of the works of

Schumann and Mendelssohn. While some of the songs are by Söderman and Norman, most of the repertoire comprised works by Fritz Arlberg, John Jacobsson, Karl Valentin, Vilhelm Svedbom and Emil Sjögren, who went on to become the most famous of them all. These songs were hardly for domestic use, requiring as they did an almost professional level of vocal and piano technique that made them better suited to the public concert than the private home. Besides, the lyrics contain more advanced poetry than was appropriate for the petty bourgeois middle class. The older collection of songs was suitable for all social categories, but in the newer one can start to discern a clear distinction between popular and serious, between traditionalism and “avant-garde”, between common folk and “aesthetes”.

The larger publishing houses might indeed have issued some of this more demanding repertoire, but most of the sonatas, chamber pieces, cantatas and so forth that were published came either from abroad (Germany) or from the Swedish Art Music Society (founded in 1859), which handled publications that were important but unprofitable. Over the thirty years from 1870 to 1900, 18 chamber music works were thus published, many by non-established composers, as well as songs, cantatas and scores, such as Norman’s *Symfoni nr 2* (1873) and Berwald’s “*Sérieuse*” (1874).

It is during this time that one can talk of the birth of music history as an academic subject in Sweden. Granted, the Royal Swedish Academy of Music had already begun to hold music history lectures in the 1850s, but they were wholly dependent on foreign writings; the text books that were produced before 1870 were derivative compilations, possibly with the exception of Abraham Mankell’s partially original *Musikens historia* (1864). Individual enthusiasts conducted large-scale studies, such as C.E. Södling’s examination of folk music and B.W. Hallberg’s of hymnology, but they failed to bring about any notable results in print. This said, Richard Dybeck’s researches on Swedish folk music achieved appreciable renown, in part through *Runa, en skrift för Nordens fornvänner* (1865-76), as did Fredrik August Dahlgren’s on theatre through his still indispensable *Förteckning öfver svenska skådespel uppförda på Stockholms theatrar 1737-1863* (1866). Leonard Höijer also made worthy Swedish contributions in his *Musik-Lexikon* (1864-67) and his annotated edition of Geijer & Afzelius’s *Svenska folkvisor* (1880). The most multifaceted master in the field was Adolf Lindgren, who began his career as a music writer in 1876 as a critic for the newspaper *Aftonbladet* and musical editor for the first edition of the encyclopaedia *Nordisk Familjebok*. Learned biographies were written by C. A. Forssman of Hæffner (1872) and later by professor of aesthetics Carl Rupert Nyblom of A.F. Lindblad (1881)

### ***The 1880s***

The decade has been dubbed the era of the “doldrums poetry”, as authors started, literally and figuratively, to drift from poetry to prose, depicting the underbelly of a broken society. It was a time when flourishing trade brought social upheaval that turned old traditions in all strata of society on their head.

“The infiltration of the plutocracy into the worlds of the nobility and the patricians occasioned them to emphasise their hereditary or official qualifications, the superior merits of their cultivation, the loftiness of their family names, the delineating significance of their forms of social intercourse and circles of acquaintances.” (Ahlström 1947, p. 240).

While crass utilitarian opinions guided the Riksdag, which temporarily withdrew its subsidies for the Royal Opera, the public entertainment scene enjoyed much greater expansion than the concert scene.

Such social problems were hardly going to be solved by the Riksdag, however, which busied itself more with defence, schools and import duties than with ideologies, despite the feuding of liberal and conservative principles. The party system was still quite

underdeveloped, and only really grew after the representation reform, starting with the Lantmanna Party (1868), which split in 1888 into the Old and New Lantmanna parties. A breakthrough for the trade unions came after the Sundsvall strike of 1879, and ten years later the Social Democrat Party was born, but not before the appearance of local associations and the publication by *Socialdemokraten* in 1885, the newspaper's first year, of Henrik Menander's *Arbetets söner*, written to a well-known men's choir tune by Nils Peter Möller (composed originally for Atterbom's "Upp genom luften"). The labour movement was quick to grasp how vital unison song was to cohesion and agitation, and started printing small song booklets from 1888, with many of the lyrics written to familiar melodies in accordance with tried and tested parodical praxis.

Many labourers admired the four-part male choruses as cultivated primarily within the academic world. On the whole, the 1880s was the age of expansion for the association-affiliated men's choirs outside the university cities of Uppsala and Lund. Previously, the predominant singing ensemble was the quartet, an illuminative transitional phenomenon being *Kvartettsångarförbundet* (the Association of Quartet Singers) in Stockholm, which at its inception (1883) comprises a double quartet, but which soon became a large male choir of working and middle class singers. That same year saw the formation of *Sällskapet för svenska kvartettsångens befrämjande* (the Society for the Promotion of Swedish Quartet Singing), which devoted itself, chiefly, to producing new compositions through its competitions and publications.

The congregations of the non-conformist movement also had a predilection for singing together to different types of accompaniment. But the repertoire was much richer than in the labour movement and the song books legion, such as the Methodists' *Psalmer och lofsånger* (1870), the Baptists' *Psalmisten* (1880) and the Salvation Army's *Strids-Sånger*. Everyone took songs from Ira Sankey's *Sånger till Lammets lof* (1875-86). The Swedish Salvation Army (founded in 1883) became, musically, the most ambitious non-conformist movement of them all, and required orchestras for its meetings; within a mere five years, it had established musical bands from Malmö to Sundsvall.

Similar wind orchestras emerged around the 1880s at numerous places, formed within associations or schools, or independently. Many factory and mill towns created ensembles, often with the financial backing of the works proprietor, that would play at dances, parties, celebrations and the like. They presented the labourers with welcome opportunities for playing while boosting the companies' prestige and giving the local villages fresh traditions and a revived sense of community spirit. In doing this, they drew on the experiences of the sharpshooter bands' wind music, which here – as within the Salvation Army and temperance movement – had its imitators.

All this music can be catalogued under the popular music sector, which thus expanded considerably. But much was also being done on the art music side to attract and enlighten new audiences. The long-lived *Svensk Musiktidning* (founded in 1881) in particular contributed much to this end with its excellent reviews and articles.

In 1881 Oscar Byström began to arrange motet evenings and concerts in St James's Church in Stockholm and elsewhere, offering liturgical music from Palestrina onwards. Come the end of the 1880s, churches were founding choirs that performed works by the great masters, modelled chiefly on J.A. Josephson's Cathedral Choir in Uppsala (founded in 1868). The Bach renaissance (at least on the vocal side) finally reached Sweden through the first production of his *St Matthew Passion* (1890), with Andreas Hallén conducting the Stockholm Philharmonic Society (Handel, on the other hand, was a household name by then). Also important in this regard was the Richard Andersson school of music (founded in 1886) by virtue of the charisma of its leader and the rapid expansion and high ambitions of his enterprise. Both Hallén and Andersson had been profoundly influenced in their

innovativeness by their experiences in Germany, especially Berlin, which by this time had grown into something of a music metropolis.

Tor Aulin also had a few years in Berlin behind him when, in 1887, he formed the Aulin Quartet – which welcomed Richard Andersson-student Wilhelm Stenhammar as pianist in 1894. In Stockholm, the ensemble held concerts of pure classical or modern chamber music, softening its programme for its tours of the provinces. Previously, quartets had performed more sporadically, partly on account of flaccid public enthusiasm, but throughout the 1800s, chamber music was performed in interested homes and salons and in a couple of societies set up for the very purpose: early Mazer's in Stockholm and Eugène Sundberg's in Gothenburg (founded in 1884).

As touring became more commonplace on the music scene, there was ever more opportunity to applaud Swedish and foreign "stars". This veritable cult of celebrity reached a kind of culmination when Countess Casa Miranda, born as crofter's daughter Christina Nilsson, sang for 200,000 listeners from the balcony of Gothenburg's Grand Hotel (alternating with choral singing by Par Bricole) on 14 September 1885, and again nine days later for an even larger crowd from the balcony of the Grand Hotel in Stockholm, an event so popular that many lives were lost in the crush.

At the same time, German pianist and conductor Hans von Bülow noted that "the Swedes' altogether unusual *receptiveness* must perhaps be placed in relation to their *sterility* in the realm of music" (Svensk Musiktidning 1882, p. 83 f.). Comments such as this appeared occasionally throughout the century (see p. 199 f.). Von Bülow's observation was underpinned by the Nordic Music Festival in Copenhagen in 1888, where the Swedish contribution was paltry. Of interest in this regard is Johan Lindegren's definition of the term "national music". Contrary to the majority, who took it to mean student and folk songs, to Lindgren it meant

"a *universal music*, represented through the grand tonal forms in the classical or classical-romantic style, with or without national colour but sprouting from within our own borders." (the music journal *Necken* 1880:1, signed "Orfeus").

What Lindegren actually had in mind is unclear, but all that existed of this national music at this time was Ivar Hallström's operas, Ludvig Norman's later chamber music, Andreas Hallén's symphonic poems and Emil Sjögren's solo songs, piano lyricism and violin sonatas. It was Sjögren more than anyone else who was loved and admired and it is he who best represents Sweden's art-music 1880s.

### ***The 1890s***

Diversity and breadth were the hallmarks of this era, in music as much as anything else. On the one hand were the high-spirited music hall shows at Stockholm's Alhambra and Sveasalen, on the other deeply serious Wagner productions at the Opera (*The Valkyrie*, 1895), or rather at the Svenska Teatern pending completion of the new opera house. At one end, the Salvation army was fighting the cause of temperance and salvation armed with music and song, and at the other, the drink was flowing to light-entertainment music in cafés, restaurants and music halls, which flourished until the ban on alcohol at stage performances in 1896. It is for this reason that theatres began putting on revues.

Meanwhile, art music had seen such a surge in popularity that the entire music scene was now more public than it had ever been before. The decade was replete with all manner of concerts of a higher, more consistent artistic standard than in previous decades. It was now that Beethoven was established once and for all as a Titan in the compositional firmament, and his piano and violin sonatas featured regularly on the programmes; the Aulin Quartet often played his quartets – in the 1901-02 season *exclusively* so; his *Missa solemnis* was



performed in Stockholm 1894 and 1899; and in the spring of 1897 three of the Opera's symphony concerts were devoted solely to the master. Beethoven had become the "benchmark" of music, as Peterson-Berger wrote in the first issue of Gothenburg's *Musiktidning* in 1898. Against this backdrop, it is not so strange that the 1890s also marked the Swedish breakthroughs of Brahms, Berlioz and our own Franz Berwald.

The art-music world also had public educational aspirations, the most interesting initiative coming from doctor and culture-historian Anton Nyström with his *Stockholms Arbetarinstitut* (Stockholm's Working Men's Institute, founded in 1880), where the working class would be scientifically educated and aesthetically schooled – an ambition that became realisable when the institute settled into its own premises in 1894. It immediately held its first "folk concert" of music by classical and more modern composers, selecting their most accessible pieces or movements, and sometimes even in simplified arrangements. It went on to hold some 30 such folk concerts a year, arranged to begin with by Nyström himself and later Tor Aulin (1901-09).

In 1895, similar folk concerts were given in Gothenburg, there too arranged by the city's Working Men's Institutet under the direction of Karl Valentin. Halmstad and Gävle followed suit in 1898 and Malmö in 1900. In 1901 Valentin moved to Stockholm as the secretary of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music, where he continued to arrange folk concerts, this time under the auspices of Stockholms Borgarskolan and with a strong bias towards Swedish composers. There was no lack of audiences, and a third series could be offered for a number of years. These "musical evenings for working men" were organised by Laura Netzel, a trained pianist and professional composer, from 1894 to 1907 and often featured excellent singers and musicians.

Another type of cultural "popularisation" came about through the indefatigable Artur Hazelius, who, after spending many years' collection and preparation, opened Skansen, the National Museum of Cultural History's open air branch, on 11 October 1891. Hazelius gave music generous space in his project: the Royal Swedish Navy Band played both winter and summer, folk music was performed on the violin and nyckelharpa (keyed fiddle), there were folk dances and wedding ceremonies, and songs were sung and stories told. Dybeck would have done something similar in his time, but in a manner that suited the middle class. Hazelius wanted to display the folk originals, and no doubt many visitors thought that Jödde i Göljaryd was a genuine accordion-playing farmhand or that "Delsbostintan" a callous-handed farmer, and not, respectively, an engineer-cum-dialect collector and a journalist. This said, both had sourced the stories and songs they told from the authentic environment. Skansen was at once an amusement park, a folk museum and a culture-historical school, which had its successors elsewhere in Sweden (Lund's Kulturen) and abroad.

The decade's renewed interest in Swedish nature and cultural life manifests itself in numerous ways, including in Richard Andersson's collection *Svenska nationaldanser* for piano four hands, containing 44 folk tunes in effective arrangement and short preludes and bridge passages, and Peterson-Berger's *Frösöblomster* (1896-1914) for piano, which fuses folk music with depictions of provincial life and *naturlyrik*.

The 1897 General Art and Industrial Exposition of Stockholm, officially arranged to celebrate Oscar II's silver jubilee, was intended to flaunt how modern Scandinavia had become. The region had caught up in the European progress race and could now put the fruits of its civilisation on show. Could a modern technological civilisation advance much further? There was the telephone, a global telegraph network, machines of all kinds, a diverse press, cities with effective cleaning and waste collection, schools, seminars, universities and so forth. One could not but gape in astonishment at the vast diversity of inventions displayed by the industry section's 2,400 Swedish exhibitors, supplemented by 750 Norwegian, 400

Danish and 300 Russian. The art section, with its 229 Swedish artists and architects and 341 foreign, never failed to impress either.

There were also, of course, mechanical musical instruments in this, the epoch of the machine. There was the pianola with its rich paper-scroll repertoire, musical boxes in all shapes and sizes and, in one corner, Edison's phonograph and its recordings of Swedish singers and actors. Maybe this curiosity could be improved slightly to give clearer and more durable recordings – and might one even be able to record a song transmitted by telephone?

Music was celebrated through both the Second Nordic Music Festival in June, with its chamber and orchestral music, songs and cantatas, and the First Swedish Choral Festival in September, the grand general mustering of men's choir singing. A temporary music hall of impressive dimensions was erected for the purpose, designed by exhibition architect Ferdinand Boberg, with a 600 sq. m. platform for choir and orchestra. The music committee's festive dinner was held at Hasselbacken, where Gunnar Wennerberg spoke compellingly of "art", of Geijer, Lindblad and Josephson, "the noble ideal of youth" (*Aftonbladet* 9/6 1897).

Reference here to ideas about the "natural" and natively, folkishly "naive" character of song gave expression to the entire decade's predilection for vocal music. This Wennerberg, one of the decade's most influential cultural personages, was one of those who maintained the "superiority" of vocal music over instrumental music – from a characteristically idealistic point of view – to the last. A letter to Grieg from 1898 makes this point clearly. In an article on Mozart (in *The Century*), Grieg had identified Bach, Beethoven and Wagner as the greatest composers in the history of music. Wennerberg disagrees; according to him, the trio were rooted in *instrumental music*, while it was *vocal music* that was the "proper representative of the highest form of music":

"The human voice is not a *normal* instrument. It has the unique ability in song to employ spirit, i.e. to render the idea tonally – not, that is, like bassoons and violins *merely* with the right emotional mood. Furthermore, all these extraordinary instrumentalists have abused the human voice – and not with impunity. ... Let me hear Bach on the organ, clavier or violin, Beethoven on the piano, in the string quartet or symphony, Wagner in the orchestra; but let me hear Handel, Glück and Mozart in the oratorio and opera! Imagine – what magnificent solos, ensembles, choruses and recitative these men knew how to compose! And above all – what true characterisation, what magnificent drama and finally, what virtuous use of small means for the deepest, most sensitive passions!" (G. Wennerberg, letter to E. Grieg 10/9 1898; after the original in the Grieg Museum, Bergen).

Subsequently, Peterson-Berger would similarly claim that Beethoven only reached true perfection with the choral finale of his ninth symphony, where in engaging the services of the written word he appealed more directly to the human soul. Instrumental music – at least of the Nordic kind – ought to aspire to emulate not the German classicists and Brahms but the solo song, as Emil Sjögren had done in his violin sonatas.

Related to this is Peterson-Berger's 1898 review of Stenhammar's F minor quartet, in which he maintained that the thorough motivic processing of the thematic material demanded by the quartet was irreconcilable with the almost modest folk song-like melodic lines and formal simplicity demanded by the national style. Nor was the classicist tradition-bound quality that generally characterises the new quartets reconcilable with a distinct national character. The string quartet was, in other words, not cut out to be a national musical form. Instead, it was the *violin sonata*, which, according to Peterson-Berger, Sjögren demonstrated with his own works in that genre. They represented

"an insemination by the highly developed Swedish art song of the instrumental forms, which in themselves are bereft of national life. They are bundles of sonorous songs without words that nevertheless often yearn for the word.... It is national: an outer made spontaneously apparent from the inner disposition of a certain county or a certain part of a country." (*Dagens Nyheter* 23/2 1898.)

The Nordic disposition and culture were thus, in essence, incompatible with classical music forms, an opinion that was based on a melodic aesthetic that Peterson-Berger himself embraced and believed had confirmed for him in the more “singable” than “instrumental” themes in that feature in the works of Grieg, Sjögren and others.

A kind of repudiation of the dilettantish gravitation of Swedish music towards the song, melody and folk song can be detected in the way Stenhammar, like Norman and others before him, avoid both the Swedish folk idiom and Nordic mood in their smaller works too. And yet Stenhammar himself had approached this very musical sphere at the start of his career with the opera *Gildet på Solhaug*, flushed with the poetic Scandinavianism found in Sjögren and the young Peterson-Berger but inspired more by Björnson, Ibsen, J.P. Jacobsen and Drachmann than by Swedish poets. At the same time, the Norwegian authors and composers could teach their Swedish colleagues what it meant to be more deeply devoted to their nation.

If Swedish composers had previously turned to foreign poets – “occasionally, more was sung in Danish, Norwegian and even German than in Swedish” (Wallner I, p. 72) – the Swedish poets of the 1890s – Heidenstam, Levertin, Fröding, Karlfeldt, Tor Hedberg – were now being set to music to an extent that would be unprecedented in the annals of the nation’s music.

### ***The new century***

An intense democratisation of society predicated on the better education of broader population groups, engendered greater responsibility for municipal and governmental matters – exercised through extended and eventually universal suffrage. It also resulted in a growing tendency to gather in societies and organisations with a democratically elected board held accountable to the collective. The increasing differentiation of society into different interest groups was thus matched by organisations set up to look after these interests, whether they be of an ideal or material nature. This trend towards democratic organisation also spread into the world of music.

A number of tendencies that lay dormant in music during the later decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were now given expression in the organisations and institutions of the 20<sup>th</sup>. In the church music sector, people started to organise and discuss repertoires, psalmody and choir performances. *Kyrkosångens vänner* (the society of the friends of church singing, founded in 1889), an association of clergymen, devoted itself almost entirely to the new ideas of rhythmic chorales, their discussions eventually giving rise to a new chorale book, sanctioned in 1921, to replace the old Hæffner volume from 1820.

In 1901, the church musicians formed *Sveriges Allmänna Organist och Kantorsförening* (the national general association of organists and cantors), which initially also grappled with chorale book issues but as time went on evolved into more of a trade union. At the same time more and more churches were starting to establish mixed choirs able to enrich services with polyphonic works by the great church composers. Here, Abraham Mankell and J.A. Josephson had been forerunners in the 1850s and 60s, but church choirs did not become common, not even in the larger churches, before the 1900s, and it was not until 1925 that they could form their own national association – *Sveriges Kyrkosångsförbund* (the Swedish association of church singers).

Developments in the choral field were also reflected in the organisations formed. The first decade of the 1800s had been dominated by the men’s quartet and men’s choral singing. After the 1897 singing festival there appeared different provincial societies and then finally the national *Svenska Sångarförbundet* (the Swedish Choral Society), constituted in connection with the Second Swedish Choral Festival at the Art Industries Exhibition in Stockholm in 1909. The previous choral festival (1897) had been led by the biggest name in

Uppsala's singing community, Ivar Hedenblad, but the second was placed under the charge of engineer Gustaf Hultquist, an event that occasioned the absence of students from Uppsala and Lund.

Mixed choirs appeared much later. To be sure, mixed choirs were not unknown throughout the 1800s in the music societies, where the orchestral philharmonic repertoire dominated. But they had no place in the male-dominated professional associations. Towards the end of the 1800s and especially in the early 1900s, women's emancipation was manifested in the appearance of mixed a cappella choirs, but it would not be until 1925 that they were given a national organisation in *Sveriges Körförbund* (the Swedish Choir Association). In this regard, the non-conformist churches were more progressive. In 1913, the Baptists' many mixed choirs joined together to form the *Svenska Baptisternas Sångarförbund* (the Swedish Baptists' choral association), Sweden's first national organisation for mixed choirs. In this context, it is remarkable that the professional musicians waited until 1907 before following suit.

The time – and the public – were now ripe for regular orchestral concerts instead of the sporadic performances held by the Royal Court Orchestra. A further development of the symphony orchestras' programming took place under the influence of the leading turn-of-the-century conductors (Hans von Bülow, Weingartner, Richter, Nikisch and others). The first concert by the newly formed Stockholm Concert Society was given on 21 October 1902, with Tor Aulin conducting and a programme that included Beethoven, César Franck, Peter Cornelius and Berwald – the great classicist, a modern French and a German composer and the Swedish classicist. The Concert Society had to wait, however, until 1914 for its own orchestra, and another twelve years for a concert hall to perform in.

Instead it was Gothenburg that, in 1905, received the country's first regular symphony orchestra, and by 1906 it was already playing some of the new and interesting Swedish works: Alfvén's second symphony, Peterson-Berger's first symphony and Stenhammar's first piano concerto. From 1907 to 1922, Wilhelm Stenhammar was its chief conductor in charge of the programming, abetted for a few years (1909-12) by Tor Aulin. Stenhammar introduced special school concerts in 1908, staying true to his untiring ambition to cultivate audiences and give them a deeper understanding of the best and most noble works of music. The three-day "music festival" in 1911 was exclusively Viennese classical and in 1913 it was all Wagner and Beethoven; by 1915 it was the turn of the Swedish composers, for whom Stenhammar always held a fondness – possibly with the exception of Peterson-Berger, whom Aulin took on instead. Only the music of four Swedes was performed at the five festival concerts in 1915: Alfvén, Aulin, Sjögren and Stenhammar. One of the works was a premiere, namely Stenhammar's G minor symphony, arguably his most significant work and dedicated to "my dear friends in the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra".

A sign of how music was changing in Sweden was Stenhammar's speech at the 1919 Nordic Music Festival in Copenhagen: "We are moving away from bourgeois romanticism and heading towards...the idea of music as an expression of life itself, of its own beating heart and its frissons of anguish and joy". What a contrast this must have been to Wennerberg's speech at the 1897 music festival.

Under a degree of influence from the Gothenburg Orchestra, the Riksdag awarded a grant that was used to establish orchestral societies in Helsingborg, Norrköping and Gävle (1912). Orchestral music and choir societies had, of course, long existed in countless towns and cities, but they lived a precarious life, dependent on the goodwill of generous enthusiasts and donors. With the new century, it also became increasingly common for municipalities and, to a certain extent, the government to step in with subsidies.

Music historical interests also started to gain an organisational platform, and in 1901 a museum of music history opened in the opera house, largely made possible through a

donation by merchant Carl Claudius in Malmö. That same year, Tobias Norlind published his history of Swedish music before continuing to be an assiduous researcher and writer in the fields of music history and folklore. He was a docent of literature and music history (!) in Lund and in 1919 moved to Stockholm to become curator of the Museum of Musical History and one of the founders of *Svenska Samfundet för Musikforskning* (the Swedish Society for Musicology).

New technology and commercialisation had infiltrated the music industry, and it is unlikely that the music publishing houses had ever printed so much sheet music in so many genres as they did in the decades around the turn of the century. After 1920, this role was partly appropriated by the phonogram industry. Gramophone cylinders first went on sale in about 1900 and were soon followed by the more practical lateral-cut discs; by 1920 the repertoire of music available for purchase was quite extensive.

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