

THE THEATRES AND THEIR MUSIC

The 1800s was when the theatrical arts in Sweden established their broad, middle-class roots and the beginnings of an institutionalised form. In town after town, special theatres sprung up in which audiences could mingle in spacious foyers and actors prepare themselves in dressing rooms, and where appropriate space could be made for the stage equipment.

After King Gustav III's death, the two royal theatres in Stockholm struggled to keep their identities and finances alive. Was the Opera royal or national? Were its appropriations to come from the royal coffers or the state treasury? Were the concepts of king and nation reconcilable or were they in opposition to each other? Was purpose of the theatre entertainment or edification? Was the theatre even morally acceptable? Discussions on issues such as these continued throughout the century, more intently so as the century wore on.

There can be no gainsaying, however, that theatres became an increasingly indispensable feature of both city and province. The broad task of dramatic cultivation very much rested on the many touring companies, which although multifaceted early on in the century became gradually more genre-specialised towards the end, coinciding after the turn of the 1900s with the advancements made by the new mass media of film.

Up until the 1860s, two or even three plays were generally acted out during one performance. The normal setup was a three-acter and a one-acter with an intervening concert, both plays regularly having at least some kind of "lyrical" (i.e. sung) element. Spoken drama without music only started to appear towards the end of the century.

Theatrical genres

The many genre designations of the 1800s sometimes, but not always, state the nature or extent of their musical elements:

"Opera" in its pure form was set to music throughout and comprised passages of recitative and song numbers (solos or ensembles) alongside instrumental movements such as overtures and ballets. The term "operetta", literally "little opera", was used synonymously in Sweden with the term *sångspel*, but as of the 1860s became mainly associated with the particular kind of music drama genre combining song and spoken dialogue that was crafted in Paris and Vienna and that was distinguished by its satirical or sentimental popular appeal.

The genres of "Drama", "tragedy", "comedy" and "farce" generally contained some kind of music or singing. If the song element was substantial yet the spoken dialogue still dominant, the term "Drama with song", "comedy with song" etc. was used. If the music was more dominant but there was still dialogue between the numbers, the term *sångspel* was used, which corresponds to the French term *opéra-comique* or the German *Singspiel*. *Sångspel* was often wrongly called "opera" and, unlike most plays "with song", the music was specially composed. Plays whose song lyrics were written to borrowed tunes were referred to in Swedish as *vådevill* (from the French "vaudeville", deriving from the term "voix de ville", voice of the town). A *vådevill* could be either tragic or, as was more commonly the case, comic.

A form of entertainment related to *vådevill* was the "revue", which became a genre in its own right in the mid-1800s, when, in keeping with the denotation of its homophone "review", its main purpose was to offer retrospective new-year reviews with loosely connected comedy songs in rhyming couplets. Revues with more coherent plots were called "revue comedies". In Sweden, the term *variété* denoted a varied form of entertainment that often included illusionism and acrobatics with the song and dance. The "cabaret" genre, which arrived in

Sweden in the early 1900s and which brought its often satirical dialogue and songs to bars and restaurants, was cut short by new alcohol laws in 1919.

Some terms that changes in usage can render easily misunderstood deserve a mention. Frans Hodell called his play *Himmel och underjord* (1886) a “fantastical folk play in 4 acts with *kupletter*, choruses and melodrama”. Here, the term “fantastical” refers to its supernatural content (Lucifer, Cupid, witches, goblins, etc.), while “folk play” means that it also features normal people in everyday situations. The word *kupletter* (vaudeville songs) refers to lyrics that had several stanzas sung to the same melody. Finally, “melodrama” means that some spoken dialogue or mute action is supported by instrumental accompaniment. Such melodramas were common at certain dramatic climaxes in the plays of the time, and the word is used in this sense here. (Elsewhere were other meanings: the Italian *melodramma* is synonymous with opera, while the French *mélodrame* is the same as a thrilling dramatic plotline, a kind of theatrical audience-magnet, that was introduced by Pixéré-court in Paris in the early 19th century.)

The Stockholm monopoly

Since 1798, theatrical performances in the capital could only be staged with royal permission. At the start of the 19th century only three theatres were permanently thus licensed. First and foremost, there were the two royal theatres: Stora teatern (i.e. the Royal Opera) in the Gustavian opera house that was opened in 1782, and Dramatiska teatern (the Royal Dramatic Theatre), which was established in the Arsenal in the former Makalös palace in 1793. The third was Djugårdsteatern, for which Abraham De Broën and his children had a royal licence from 1801 to open during the summer season.

During the final years of Gustav IV Adolf’s reign (1806–09), the Opera was closed by royal decree while the Arsenal’s dramatic troupe continued to stage spoken dramas and lighter comic operas (*sångspel*). Several singers and dancers were dismissed and the opera house itself was converted during the 1808–09 war into a militia hospital and did not reopen to perform its proper function until the new king Karl XIII ascended to the throne.

On 6 October 1810, Stockholm governor Anders Fredrik Skjöldebrand was made director of the royal theatres. A month later (5 November), after gathering up the dispersed singers and musicians, he was able to hold the Opera’s first opera performance in almost five years – a gala performance of Naumann’s *Gustaf Wasa*, with the dramatic Caroline Müller in the role of Christina Gyllenstierna, Christopher Karsten as Christiern and Carl Gustaf Lindström as the eponymous monarch. That same day, Bernadotte was elected crown prince, and fittingly enough some new allegorical images were injected into Gustav Wasa’s dreams that culminated in the sunlit names of Karl XIII and Karl Johan. While an obvious expression of royalism, in its context it was also a reflection of the nationalist *zeitgeist*.

It was important to the royal theatres that they received more from the royal coffers than from the state treasury, a circumstance that continued into the middle of the century. The king twice rescued the theatre from the brink of ruin when the parliament expressed its reluctance to defray its constant deficit. The theatre directors were also appointed from court circles, some, such as Count Gustaf Lagerbjelke, even proving highly competent artistic leaders.

It was thus not so remarkable that the theatre occasionally paid homage to its patron. The court also demonstrated a professional interest in theatre during the reign of Karl XIII. Queen Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta, for instance, had her lifeguards’ quarters converted into a palace theatre. The court performed spoken and sung plays in French, works that were later staged, in Swedish, at the Opera and Arsenal theatre. On 8 March 1811, for example, the court played an *opéra-comique* (Crémont-Bouilly) called *La haine aux femmes*, which was later (7 January 1814) performed in translation (*Kvinnohataren*) at the Opera. *Les deux prisonniers* (Dalayrac-Marsollier) was performed on 5 May 1811 with a cast that included August Adelswärd,

Marianne Koskull and the future opera director Gustaf Löwenhjelm. The Opera personnel then staged the same work at the court in French on 15 October 1812, at which chief conductor of the Royal Court Orchestra Edouard Du Puy first made his name as a singer.

Ever since the end of the 1700s, it was the French repertoire that dominated at the Opera. Successes included *Cendrillon* (1811), *Les rendez-vous bourgeois* (1814) and *Joconde* (1820) by Isouard, *Ma tante Aurore* (1813), *Le nouveau seigneur de village* (1818) and *La dame blanche* (1827) by Boieldieu and a lavish production of *Ferdinand Cortez* by Spontini in 1826.

Gradually, however, this dominance began to wane, even if the action and staging traditions long retained their French influences. In March 1812, Sweden saw its first Mozart opera – a *sångspel* to be more accurate: *The Magic Flute*, which was also marketed in Sweden as *The mysteries of the Egyptians*. The following year came *Don Giovanni*, largely on account, presumably, of the fact that Du Puy made an ideal Don Juan and had already wowed Copenhagen audiences in the same role in 1807. Du Puy augmented the opera with his own music, which accompanied the lead character's adventurous leap into Hell – a hair-raising ending that replaced Mozart's moralising closing sextet until 1856. In keeping with the French *opéra-comique* tradition that prevailed in Stockholm, the opera was performed up to this point with spoken dialogue instead of recitative between the numbers. The Italian repertoire included Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* (1821) and *Così fan tutte* (1830). Rossini started to be played in the 1820s (*The Turk in Italy* 1824, *The Barber of Seville* 1825), although the great Rossini fever did not strike until the next decade. German works that attracted interest included Weber's *Der Freischütz* (1823) and his incidental music for *Preciosa* (1824).

The Arsenal theatre also made use of the Royal Court musicians, who performed countless overtures, choruses and marches in the intervals as well as incidental music to plays, such as *Kreutzfahrer* in 1804 (Derkert 1988, p. 64) and other popular melodramas by Kotzebue.

Alongside the monopoly theatre, there were several private bourgeois theatre companies in Stockholm, such as *Nytta och Nöje* (wound down in 1815), *Aurora* 1815–35, (founded by Zacharias Strindberg) and *Polymnia*, which from 1815 performed in both the Kirstein House by Munkbron bridge and on Klara strandgata. Another Stockholm-associated company was Löfholmen's *Theatersällskap*, which to circumvent the licence, performed in the summers of 1828–30 just outside the city perimeter at Skanstull. There were 65 members of the company, including such professional musicians as conductor and composer Eduard Brendler, violinists Fredrik Pacius and Franz Preumayr (bassoonist in the Royal Court Orchestra and married to Bernhard Crusell's daughter), cellists Carl Preumayr and August Ferdinand Mann, tenor August Arnoldson, and singer Fredrique Arnoldson (mother of Oscar Arnoldson). Its performances included the popular *Une folie* (comedy with song, Méhul-Bouilly) (Bäckström 1954).

The provinces, pre-1830

Theatres outside Stockholm also required a royal concession to perform before 1829, with the Stenborg troupe long having the most extensive provincial licence. In around 1800 the number of travelling companies increased and such licences became hard currency. In each case, the county governor and the mayor would decide on a permit, which was generally tied to a particular area. For instance, Johan Peter Lewenhagen received a permit for Skåne in 1804, which was extended to Gothenburg in 1807 and towns in Östergötland in 1809.

When the Broën summer season at Djurgårdsteatern came to an end, the company had to spend the rest of the year touring the Swedish provincial towns. Abraham de Broën, who had been the principal actor on the royal stages, and his excellent players showed the way for many later touring companies. Abraham was succeeded as theatre director by his son Isaac

and then, after Isaac's death in 1814, by his son-in-law Carl Wildner (born Engeström), a former employee of the Royal Dramatic Theatre and Lewenhagen's travelling company. Wildner staged not only plays with music but also *Der Freischütz* with the sisters Thérèse Håkansson (née Magito) and Angélique Magito as Agathe and Anna.

Former singers and dancers from the Stockholm Opera could often be found in the provinces. On 26 October 1809, a new theatre was opened in Malmö by a company centred on dancers Jean Baptiste Brulo and Giovanni Ambrosiani. One of their productions was *Prolog*, featuring songs and ballets by Brulo. Johan Anton Lindqvist's troupe, which often performed in Gothenburg, included the young singer Henriette Widerberg, who appeared in numerous *opéra-comiques* in 1816–17 before her Stockholm debut. Other provincial company leaders of note were Fredrik Julius Widerberg, Joseph August Lambert, Fredrik Wilhelm Stålberg and Erik Wilhelm Djurström – this last a particular success in Gothenburg and elsewhere.

Singing training and artists, pre-1830

In the early 1800s, the singing ideal was still tightly bound to the Italian castrato style; a castrato by the name of Sebastiani was even engaged at the Royal Opera between 1805 and 1809. The French conservatory's singing principles were printed in Sweden back in 1814, but they seem to have left little mark on contemporary Swedish teaching. The country's leading pedagogues were the Royal Opera's singing-masters, tenor Carl Magnus Crælius and bass Carl August Stieler. In 1820, Stieler, who had been trained at Leipzig's St Thomas School, conceived (as Hæffner had before him) a theory of singing that drew on the singing school of German bass J.A. Hiller, who himself had had Dresden-composer Hasse and castrato Carestine as his role models. The school's method was distinguished by a light, pure voice, clear attack, "smiling" mouth, distinct consonants, coloratura and consummate breath control.

During these years, vocal training concentrated mainly on the female voice, Crælius's principal students being Elisabeth Frösslind-Lindström, Anna Sofia Thunberg-Sevelin, Christina Wässelius-Casagli and Henriette Widerberg. Tenor Carl Gustaf Lindstöm, who was known for his broad-ranging high chest voice, had probably been trained by Hæffner (the Opera's singing-master during the Gustavian era). Otherwise, the leading male singers were trained abroad, Ystad-born Karsten in Copenhagen by the Italian Potenza and the Swiss Du Puy in Paris and Berlin. Du Puy's singing method "was wholly French and his voice, a high baritone, sonorous, pliant and caressing, and capable of executing both tenor and baritone parts", the former using a falsetto technique (Lindgren 1907).

It should be mentioned in this context that artists were not divided into lyrical and dramatic as they are today. The best singers could be given spoken roles if they involved a fair amount of singing – e.g. in *Herman von Unna* (Vogler-Skjöldebrand; see Derkert 1988, p. 65) – while many of the leading actors such as Louis Deland, Lars Hjortsberg, Olof Ulrik Torsslow, Nils Wilhelm Almlöf, appeared in operas.

A royal theatre with opera, spoken drama and ballet

Following the Arsenal theatre fire in 1825, the only remaining royal theatre was the Royal Opera, which now staged all kinds of production, be it spoken drama, *sångspel*, opera or ballet, which occasionally came to prominence.

Notable amongst the greater operatic successes were Auber's *Fra Diavolo* (Stockholm premiere 1833), *La muette de Portici* (1836), Adam's *La poupée de Nuremberg* (1853), *Le Chalet* (1837), Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1840), *L'elisir d'amore* (1840) and *La fille du régiment* (1845), Bellini's *Norma* (1841), Flotow's *Martha* (1850) and Meyerbeer's *Robert le diable* (1839), *Les Huguenots* (1842) and *Le prophète* (1852).

After Du Puy's death in 1822, the Royal Court Orchestra was led for the next 27 years by Johan Fredrik Berwald, violinist and member of the same musical family as Franz Berwald. He was succeeded by the 28-year-old Jacopo Foroni, who continued until his untimely death in 1858. Foroni travelled to Stockholm as one of the orchestra conductors in Vincenzo Galli's Italian opera troupe, giving Swedish music a powerful shot in the arm with a series of productions in the winter season of 1848–49 at Mindre teatern and the Royal Opera, including some early Verdi. Foroni demonstrated his capacity as a composer with *Cristina di Svezia* (1849), an opera in Italian about Swedish queen Kristina. Over the ensuing years in Sweden, he wrote a good deal of incidental music, including the folklore-seasoned *Veteranerna* (Johan Jolin, 1857). His magnum opus, however, was the one-act comic opera *Advokaten Pathelin* (1858), which premiered a few months after the composer's death.

Singing training and artists, 1830–60

The classical Italian schooling, which was originally based on the castrato, and which formed the basis of the teaching methods of Crælius and Isak Berg, proved inadequate during the 1830s and 40s, especially for training the male voice, and so attempts were made to raise the tessitura – in other words, to push the voices up beyond their natural range. The guru of the desired singing technique was baritone Manuel García, in Paris in 1829–50 and subsequently in London, who was courted by most of the great Swedish singers and teachers of the time.

While all teachers were men, the most famous singers during these years were women. One of the period's first coloratura singers was Mathilde Gelhaar (née Ficker), who entered the acting school in 1828, debuted in a dramatic role that same year, and was then employed from 1834 to 58. Crælius and Berg were her singing teachers. Her voice was weak but her strength lay in her naive soubrettes (chambermaids etc.), her dainty figure and, above all, her tinkling trills as Adina in *L'elisir d'amore* and Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*.

Besides Henriette Nissen-Saloman (later active in St Petersburg), Mathilda Ebeling received more extensive García training than any other female singer. Both García and contemporary critics considered her voice far superior to Jenny Lind's in its richness and sonority. By the time of her untimely death she was working in Berlin.

JENNY LIND (1820 – 1887)

Jenny Lind was the most illustrious Swedish opera singer of the 1840s, nationally as well as internationally. She was nurtured from a tender age in the Royal Opera's acting school, having to make up for her free education by making regular performances from her first school year in 1830, initially in three dozen or so spoken dramas. Even as an eleven-year-old, she was recognised by the critics for her unusually high intelligence, her sure ear for music, her vivaciousness and her ability to convey emotions. In 1831, she began studying for the opera's singing master Isak Berg, and was precocious enough to appear in A.F. Lindblad's opera *Fronödörerna* at the tender age of 16. After her breakthrough as Agatha in *Der Freischütz* in 1838, she was given a contract and devoted the rest of her career to opera, which she sang to the exclusion of all else until 1844.

Following a period of personal maturity while residing with A.F. Lindblad and his wife, she took leave in 1841–42 to repair her middle register with Manuel García in Paris. From 1844 on, Stockholmers only got to hear her on stage from December 1847 to April 1848, the era of "Jenny Lind fever".

She is said to have cut an extremely lively and radiantly charismatic figure on stage, although the thoroughly romantic, dreamy naifs she depicted gave no room for dramatic

characterisation. Famous roles were Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Julia in *La Vestale*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Euryanthe, Alice in *Robert le diable*, Lucia di Lammermoor, Valentine in *Les Huguenots*, the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro*, La sonnambula and Norma. When performing concerts and oratorio songs, Jenny Lind's personality shone even brighter. Her repertoire consisted of German and Swedish romantic songs and Swedish folk songs, setting a trend that would come to characterise concert performances by subsequent Swedish sopranos (e.g. Signe Hebbe and Christina Nilsson).

Jenny Lind's voice had the strength of a dramatic soprano and possessed, according to Berlioz, a metallic lustre. What made it remarkable was that it also had a high soprano's delicacy and rare flexibility. Her pianissimo was like a whisper and could be coloured with a light vibrato. Her trills were perfect but her middle register somewhat husky. Jenny Lind's German-Italian ideal, plain looks and self-critical stance prevented her from impressing the panel at an audition in Paris arranged by Meyerbeer. Instead, her opera career continued elsewhere, such as Berlin, Hamburg, Vienna and London between 1844 and 1849, and she was uncommonly lauded by the crowned heads of Europe. It was for her that Mendelssohn wrote the soprano part in his oratorio *Elijah* (his early death in 1847 came as a devastating blow).

After working industriously for her entire young life, Jenny Lind quit the theatre at the age of 28 with no regrets, appearing thenceforth only at concerts. Following a brief engagement to fellow singer Julius Günther, she married, during her sensational tour of the USA in 1850–52, her German accompanist Otto Goldschmidt, with whom she had three children. After a few years in Dresden, they moved to London, where Jenny Lind died at the age of 67. A memorial plaque was dedicated to her in Westminster Abbey.

As a person, Jenny Lind was rarely happy. She made unreasonable demands on herself and her waxing piety made her often intolerant. Through her position as a morally unimpeachable and deeply religious person, she sought to raise the then particularly low standing of female artists. Her charity was magnanimous and funds still bear her name in the USA, the UK and Sweden. Every year, the Royal Swedish Academy of Music awards the much coveted Jenny Lind scholarship on her birthday, 6 October, which was assigned the name Jenny in the Swedish name day calendar in her honour.

While Jenny Lind was the most illustrious soprano of her age (see p. 136–137), it was Louise Michaëli who was the prima donna of the 1850s. She trained first for Isidor Dannström and then at the acting school in 1849–52 for Berg, Günther and Foroni, after which she was engaged by the Royal Opera. The two years between 1854 and 56 she mostly spent abroad, continuing her training for García in London and making reputation-building guest appearances in Denmark and Germany. She embarked on another four years of touring in 1859 and debuted in London. Her most lauded roles were Norma and Clytemnestra in Glück's *Iphigenia in Aulis*. The role of Guillemette in Foroni's popular *Advokaten Pathelin* was written for her. Otherwise, she sang the leads in many Mozart, Donizetti, Bellini and Meyerbeer operas, including Selika in the famed Josephson production of *L'Africaine* (see below).

According to all testimony, her voice was exceptionally well-schooled with great strength and range, and a perfect coloratura. Its pure silver ring was held up as a particular Nordic quality – the elevated ideal she expressed especially well. However, she was not as accomplished an actress as Jenny Lind, and so towards the end of her career in 1871 she took lessons for Signe Hebbe. It was said that “if Madam M[ichaëli]'s voice sat in Madam

H[ebbe]’s throat, or Madam H[ebbe]’s dramatic skills could be transferred to Madam M[ichaëli]”, this soprano would have been the foremost opera singer of all time (Hedberg 1885). When her only child died in 1870, followed shortly by her husband, she became too weak to fight her tuberculosis and she passed away in 1875 at the age of 44.

On the male side, the leading singers were tenors Isidor Dannström and Julius Günther and visiting baritone Giovanni Belletti. The Italian debuted in Stockholm in 1837 and sang there until 1844, sometimes alongside Jenny Lind; he even accompanied her later on her tour of the USA. His powerful voice and good stage skills were particularly commended in his portrayal of Figaro in *The Barber of Seville*.

Dannström worked as a singer at the Stockholm opera from 1841 to 1844, and was judged by Franz Berwald to be a superior *Don Giovanni* to Du Puy. After studying for García in 1844–45, he turned his hand to teaching, conceiving his own Singing method in 1849 (rev. 1876).

Günther debuted in 1838 and had his heyday as a singer in the 1840s. He studied for García in 1846–47. His voice was not strong, but it was beautiful and suited to lyrical parts such as Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville*, Robert in *Robert le diable* and Nemorino in *L’elisir d’amore*. Later, he went on to serve for half a century as a singing master and teacher at the Opera (until 1898, private until 1902). He was particularly admired for his instructions in phrasing and delivery.

The theatre monopoly is broken

By the 1830s, it was clear that Stockholm needed another theatre to meet the burgeoning demand. From 1832, publicist Captain Anders Lindeberg, who translated *Der Freischütz*, applied several times for permission to establish a new theatre in the capital. On being denied the right to build anything in the centre of town or on Djurgården, he published a petition (1834), directed at the parliamentary ombudsman, requesting an amendment of the law and the abolition of the Royal Opera’s monopoly. However, his words were interpreted as an attack on the King and he was sentenced to death by beheading “as a punishment to himself and as a warning to others”. A few months later he was reprieved to three years incarceration, but he insisted nonetheless on the discharge of the original sentence.

Finally, on 20 October 1834, King Karl XIV Johan resolved this delicate story, which was reported in detail in the press, by issuing a general amnesty for treason to commemorate his first setting foot on Swedish soil 24 years previously. Lindeberg was thus released, but the monopoly remained. However, Thalia, a company of amateur thespians, was given permission in 1839 to perform in the Kirstein House on Klara Strandgata (now Vasagatan) on condition that it did not advertise in the newspapers, which instead published the date when the society was due to meet (Stribolt 1982). Amongst “the amateurs” were some of O.U. Torsslow’s professional actors, who performed *Frejas altare* (1840), a charming *sångspel* by Oehlenschläger freely interpreted by Hinrik Sandström. The play ought really to be called a vaudeville, since the 32 musical numbers had borrowed their melodies from various sources.

The next step was taken in the autumn of 1841 by Torsslow, who rented the Kristein House theatre again for performances with his professional troupe, but this time without permission. Encouraged by this, Lindeberg built a new theatre by Kungsträdgården, which opened on 1 November 1842. This theatre (renamed Mindre teatern in 1846) was purchased in 1863 by King Karl XV and converted into the Royal Opera’s drama wing. By this time, Stockholmers were able to enjoy several new theatres, such as Humlegårdsteatern, Södra teatern and Ladugårdslandsteatern, all of which were built in the 1850s (see plate XXI for their locations).

Since all performances were given with music, the capital’s theatres maintained orchestras, from a full-scale symphony orchestra (the Royal Court Orchestra) to the small dozen-

musician ensembles at the small theatres. It was also quite common for visiting singers or instrumental virtuosos to perform the rich repertoire of “framework music” (i.e. primarily overtures and entr’acte music).

Vaudeville, 1830–60

Vaudeville was a particularly popular genre in the 1830s, 40s and 50s, but had been played in Stockholm since the 1700s, when the most successful was *Slätterölet eller Kronofogdarna* (Envallsson, 1787), a folk-play based on a French model (France being the home of the genre). Inspiration continued to be drawn from there in the 1800s, but also from Austria, Denmark and Germany. Vaudeville spread new and old melodies across the country, and from among the hundreds of songs that constituted this flora – generally printed in the librettos – we can pick out certain groupings: Bellman songs, Swedish folk songs, modern dance tunes, Swedish songs (such as by Åhlström, Crusell, Nordblom, Geijer, Prince Gustaf, Dannström, Wennerberg) and melodies taken from the European repertoire presented at the Royal Opera.

One of the greater successes was *Rochus Punpernickel*, a farce and “musical quodlibet” by the Austrian Stegmayer. From its premiere on Djurgården in 1819 until 1879, it was played 300 times in Stockholm as well, naturally, as in the provinces. The play contained a couple of dozen musical numbers (mostly songs) as well as choruses, including a Tyrolean quartet at the end of the first act. In Denmark, Johan Ludvig Heiberg had created a renaissance for the genre through a long string of vaudevilles, commonly with the familiar music of Bellman. Many of these songs were translated and arranged by the touring theatre director Djurström in 1824–41, one of whose biggest hits was *Sju flickor i uniform* (1832). The same comedy-vaudeville was held in Stockholm a full 192 times between 1831 and 1897 under the titles *Nya garnisonen* in Bernhard von Beskow’s translation of the Danish version by Heiberg, which in turn was a reworking of a German version, itself a translation of the French original by Théaulon & Dartois.

On translation, it was common to have the play “localised” to the home country. Nestroy’s *Anden Lumpacivagabundus* had its Swedish premiere in 1845 to a rather lukewarm reception, but when it was localised and arranged by Frans Hodell as *Andersson, Pettersson och Lundström*, it enjoyed a run of new fewer than 722 performances in Stockholm between 1865 and 1912.

With the establishment of Lindeberg’s theatre in 1842, Swedish dramatists began to write vaudeville-esque plays, most successfully August Blanche, who in the years between 1843 and 1850 produced a large number of musical comedies, most on a foreign model. For example, *En trappa upp och på nedre botten* (1843) was an adaptation of a work by the Austrian Nestroy and with music by Ahlström arranged as instructed by Blanche. Blanche’s successes encouraged other authors to also try their hand at the genre.

Touring companies in the mid-1800s

The improved performance opportunities that the new provincial theatres brought – and back then the provinces still included Finland – stimulated the proliferation of touring theatrical companies. Already by the middle of the century, countless towns had theatres with room for an orchestra and large auditoriums. This attracted a wider spectrum of social classes to the theatre for pleasure and social intercourse. Theatres also held concerts, often featuring virtuosos performing with local talents and choirs.

The leading company of the time was directed by Pierre Joseph Deland between the years 1833 and 1861. By virtue of his marriage to Charlotte de Broën, niece of the founder of Djurgårdsteatern, he was able to take over this Stockholm summer theatre quite legitimately, and then tour the provinces in the winter season. This made Uppsala a particularly important theatrical city, and through Deland’s insistent lobbying, a theatre was built there in 1841. The

repertoire comprised spoken drama and vaudeville, as well as the odd *opéra-comique* or *sångspel*, such as *Les deux Crispins* (Lemière) in 1844. The romantic drama *Preciosa*, which was on the repertoire from 1839, included choirs by Weber, which were also taken up by the Uppsala students.

Djurgårdsteatern was also managed occasionally by Deland's brother Fredrik and by O.U. Torsslow. It was Fredrik who, in 1843, heralded the new era of vaudeville by embarking on the collaboration with Blanche; it was also he who presented the folklorish vaudeville *Värmlänningarna* in Gothenburg on 17 December 1846 (less than a year after the premiere at the Royal Theatre), which would eventually become the most popular of all musical popular burlesques (*folklustspel*) in Sweden, but by no means in the absence of competition.

Other successful companies were led by Wilhelm Theodor Gille (1848–62); by Johan Peter Roos (1843–65), who managed to lose his library of plays and all his props to fire three times; and by Carl Gustaf Hessler (1848– c.1868), who, like Roos, often had *sångspel* on his repertoire. In 1850, Hessner opened Nya Norrköpingsteatern with *Systrarna på Kinnekulle* (C. Hauch), the choruses and melodramas of which were composed by Ahlström. When visiting the provinces – and this applied to Torsslow's Mindre teatern troupe – Ahlström took his own piano, which came in useful at the smaller localities where no local musicians were available. A short news item from 1834 sheds interesting light on how this might look:

“In Karlskrona, Gävle, Falun, Gothenburg and other cities, amateurs constantly assist the sung plays. In Jönköping, the entire orchestra is made up of the staff of the Court of Appeal, and in Linköping none other than the Bishop has been spotted in the orchestra participating in the music.” (Quoted from Hillberg 1948, p. 47.)

As a rule, the companies stayed for weeks or months at the same place, performing a sometimes astonishingly broad repertoire. The Stockholm plays often reached the larger provincial towns with considerable speed, provided one of the touring companies took them onto their repertoire. For example, *Ur lotsarnas liv* and *Korp-Kirsti* were played in Gothenburg within a year of their Stockholm premieres in 1863. It is worth remembering that the plays mentioned here are only typical examples of the rich 19th century repertoire. Considering that Ahlström arranged music for 125 plays, and Hermann Berens, Oscar De Wahl, Johan Wilhelm Söderman (August Söderman's father), Gustaf Stolpe and Emil Becker some fifty each, the sheer turnover of plays becomes clear. During a three-month visit to Uppsala in 1844–45, Fredrik Deland's troupe played no fewer than 44 different plays. P.J. Deland was even more extreme: in 21 evenings in Uppsala in the autumn of 1851, he put on 24 different plays, most of them twice (Taube 1940). Almost every performance comprised two plays, of which one was a one-acter. Most were spoken, perhaps with a song here and there. *Lilla slavinnan* was staged twice with Crusell's music (and the customary assistance of local amateur orchestras). There were also two vaudevilles by August Säfström and one by the Danish dramatist Hostrup.

In this way, the provinces were able to experience spoken plays, vaudevilles and *sångspel*. Larger serious and comic operas, which required both good singers and musicians, were obviously performed less often. Nevertheless, a thirst for opera took hold in Gothenburg in the 1830s, and in the years between 1836 and 1838, the German opera company performed at the Södra Hamngatan theatre many of the classic works of the opera literature, such as *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, *Don Giovanni*, *Titus* and *The Magic Flute* by Mozart, *The Barber of Seville* and *The Italian Girl in Algiers* by Rossini, and *Robert le diable* by Meyerbeer. After 1854, when the Gothenburg orchestra was organised under the direction of Joseph Czapek, it was engaged for opera performances, thus enabling lengthy sojourns by visiting opera companies. Gothenburg's Nya teatern (later Stora teatern), which would eventually stage a great deal of music drama, was inaugurated on 15 September 1859 by a touring Stockholm ensemble with the artists of Mindre teatern led by Edvard Stjernström. For

two months, the ensemble played a score of plays, including two new one-acters by Offenbach (*Le Violoneux*, *Les deux aveugles*), a vaudeville with August Söderman's music (*Den svaga sidan*) and five plays with music by J.N. Ahlström (including Blanche's *Ett resande teatersällskap*).

Expansion and specialisation at the Stockholm opera

The last decades at the Gustavian opera house, especially the 1860s and 1870s, have been called the opera's second golden era. A combination of a richer international network and national effort kicked off a period of renewal with respect to repertoire, stage design, song training and audience taste. Singers were of a particularly high calibre (see below) and the conductors Norman (assisted by Söderman), Dente and Nordqvist were blessed with an enlarged court orchestra. Stage design reached new heights under the likes of August Bournonville and Ludvig Josephson. The personal involvement of the royal brothers Karl XV and Oscar II also made a significant impact. Swedish composers also started to come to prominence during this epoch as creators of serious and comic opera, the most important work being Hallström's *Den bergtagna* of 1874.

Even if it was now that the Royal Opera started to play the large works by Verdi and Wagner, the French dominance was striking. Of the twelve most staged composers, six were French, Auber above all with his *opéra-comiques*, such as *Fra Diavolo*, *Le maçon*, *La muette de Portici*, *La part du diable*, *Les diamants de la couronne*, *Le domino noir*, and *Marco Spada*. Next most played was Mozart with the still popular *Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and *Magic Flute*. Then came Meyerbeer - *Robert le diable*, *Les Huguenots*, *Le prophète*, *L'Africaine* (sumptuously presented in 1867, two years after Paris) and *L'étoile du nord* (1881, originally written for Jenny Lind) – and Gounod with *Faust* (1862) and *Romeo and Juliet* (1868). Other much-played composers were Adam, including his *Le Chalet*, *La poupée de Nuremberg*, and the new *Si j'étais roi* (1882); Offenbach with *La belle Hélène* (at the Royal Opera 1865), *Barbe-bleu* (Royal Dramatic Theatre 1867) and *The tales of Hoffman* (1889); Bizet (e.g. *Carmen* 1878); and Thomas (*Mignon* 1873).

The foremost representatives of Italian opera were Verdi with his new *Il trovatore* (1860), *Rigoletto* (1861), *La traviata* (1868), *Aida* (1880), *Otello* (1890); Donizetti with *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *La fille du régiment*, *Leonora*, *Lucretia Borgia* and the new *Don Pasquale* (1869); and Rossini with *The Barber of Seville* and *William Tell*. Even Arrigo Boito's *Mefistofele* was a surprise hit (1883).

Of the German repertoire, it was the romantics Weber, with his *Der Freischütz* and *Oberon*, and Wagner who featured, the latter being introduced gently in 1865 with his least avant-garde work *Rienzi*, translated and directed by Fritz Arlberg. The opera was especially successful thanks to the German tenor Joseph Aloys Tichatschek's guest appearance as the eponymous hero. *The Flying Dutchman* was greeted with greater scepticism in 1872 and lasted for a run of only 13 performances (audiences had, of course, *L'Africaine*'s shipwreck to compare with), a conflict with the Royal Court Orchestra in 1874 leaving the production without the irreplaceable Arlberg.

Wagner eventually managed to win over Stockholm audiences with *Lohengrin* (1874), after which came *Tannhäuser* (1878) and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1887). But even at the premiere of this last work some members of the audience decamped after the first act. Critic Wilhelm Bauck and many with him found Wagner's music incomprehensible, unmelodic and noisy.

Apart from the music and singing, significant factors for public successes during the period were the many colourful ballets, the magical gas lighting and, above all, the mechanical special effects. The autodidact Peter Fredrik Lindström's rocking ship in *L'Africaine*, gliding swan in *Lohengrin*, flying machine in *Mefistofele*, wild hunt in *Freischütz*, roaming forest in

Hallström's *Den förtrollade katten* and the mechanical rock faces in *Den bergtagna* astounded audiences and caused much delight.

Singing training and artists 1860–90

The leading singing teachers of this period were Isidor Dannström, Julius Günther and Fritz Arlberg, as well as the first significant female pedagogues Signe Hebbe and Ellen Bergman, both colleagues of Günther's at the Royal Conservatory of Music. Signe Hebbe, who became better known for her lessons in stage presence and deportment, changed views of artistic training, especially of female artists. She advocated deep, abdominal breathing, a technique not previously used by women, and based her singing teaching on a combination of the French and Italian schools, with a meticulous approach to textual articulation, phrasing and unforced timbral beauty. Unlike former common practice, her deportment teaching was not based on the stylised movements of ballet but on an older French-Italian mime tradition, the Delsarte school and conscious, unmannered acting. With her mantra of "first the thought, then the gesture and finally the word", she gave female artists new means of delivering more profound dramatic expression, which was necessary for them to break free of "soubrettishness" and become more artistically emancipated (Lewenhaupt 1988).

The Verdi and Wagner repertoires changed singing training owing to the stronger vocal techniques they demanded. Arlberg's controversial singing method as expounded in his *Försök till en naturlig och förnuftig grundläggning af tonbildningsläran* (lit: An attempt at a natural and sensible grounding in the theory of vocal production) from 1891 was based on anatomical studies and notions of a "natural" way of singing. One of Arlberg's particularly important contributions, inspired by his Wagner studies, lay in his attempt to coach singers on the basis of the Swedish words with their native stresses and pronunciation rules. Previously, despite singing in Swedish, singers had simply adopted the patterns of Italian and French. He was also a firm believer in a natural attack instead of the so-called glottal-thrust and he considered legato phrasing especially important. However, his claim that "natural" breathing was sufficient for singing was later declared a mistake.

Leading female singers during the period were Signe Hebbe, Fredrika Stenhammar, Caroline Östberg, Mathilda Grabow and Selma Ek – besides the still (in the 1860s at least) active Michaëli. Soprano Signe Hebbe was the first genuinely talented actress on the Swedish opera scene, on which she appeared between the years 1864 to 1879, now as an employed singer, now as a guest due to her many overseas commitments. Her most distinguished role creations were Valentine in *Les Huguenots*, Fidelio, Margareta in *Faust*, Alice in *Robert le diable*, Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Violetta in *La traviata*. Hebbe was trained by Dannström, at the acting school in Stockholm (enrolled 1855), the conservatories in Berlin (Wüerst) and Paris (Masset, Levasseur and others), and by Francesco Lamperty, Adelaide Ristori and others. Although not strong, her voice was extremely well-schooled and exquisite, and in her unique deportment Hebbe mastered the grand gestures as well as the small. She was also internationally pioneering in her characterisation through her ability to portray a rich variety of females who after making their sweet entrances developed dramatically as the operas progressed. Her role studies for composers like Gounod, Thomas, David and others allowed her to create important traditions in Sweden.

Unlike Signe Hebbe, Fredrika Stenhammar was more "Swedish" in her charisma. After her training in Leipzig (Mrs Schäfer), she was given employment in Dessau in 1854 (whose theatre burnt down, however). She then, in Stockholm, became our first great Wagner prima donna during the years 1855–1879 – Senta in *They Flying Dutchman*, Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser*, Elsa in *Lohengrin* – although she was also a success in operas by Mozart, Weber

and Hallström. She combined a beautiful voice with a solid sense of style and considerable musical intelligence. She was also a teacher.

Carolina Östberg, student of both Günther and Hebbe, took over many of Louise Michaëli's roles in the 1870s. In 1879–85, she was particularly lionised as an operetta prima donna at Nya teatern (*Boccacio*, *Le petit duc* and others) and after twenty years of overseas commitments (1886–1906) returned to the Royal Opera, where she was our first Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*. She had a soprano voice that was high, clear and powerful, and considerable coloratura skills. She became a singing teacher in 1906.

Mathilda Grabow studied at the acting school from the age of 14, and then for Fredrika Stenhammar and Pauline Viardot-García. After five years in Paris, she became a leading coloratura singer at the Stockholm Royal Opera as, amongst other roles, Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Elsa in *Lohengrin* and Ingeborg in Hallström's *Den bergtagna*.

Selma Ek, student of Günther, was particularly suited to the music of Wagner and the Swedish Viking operas. Our international superstar Christina Nilsson did not attend the acting school and sang no more than four times at the Royal Opera (discounting a few concerts), and thus did not belong to the real Swedish music scene.

The leading male singers were Oscar Arnoldson, Fritz Arlberg, Anders Willman, Carl Fredrik Lundqvist (Lunkan) and, finally, Arvid Ödmann. Arnoldson studied for Günther and Stjernström and initially sang operetta at Mindre teatern before a dramatic opera debut in 1858, when he lost his voice in the middle of a performance. He later returned as a leading tenor in the 1860s and 70s, good in almost every role but above all, perhaps, *Lohengrin*. He was technically brilliant, sang perfect coloratura and could even trill on a high C. He was also dramatically convincing in his stage presence. However, fearful of once again losing his voice, he took his own life at the age of 50.

Arlberg debuted with Stjernström at Mindre teatern in 1854 and was employed at the Royal Opera two years later. Although not big, his voice was beautifully balanced and he was versatile and skilful in his acting; his roles included Valentin in *Faust* and Telramund in *Lohengrin*. Arlberg became one of Wagner's first proselytes in Sweden and was engaged as an expert, especially after his visit to Bayreuth for its opening in 1876.

Willman was trained at the acting school (of which he later became the director) and studied for Günther as well as for Duprez, Laget and Delsarte in Paris. As a lead bass for almost thirty years, he made a particular name for himself as Bertram in *Robert le diable* and *Mefistofele* in both Gounod's and Boito's versions of the Goethe drama – prompting Christina Nilsson to say in 1893 that she considered his *Mefistofele* to be one of the foremost music drama performances of the time (Rundberg 1952, p. 165) – as Marcel in *Les Huguenots*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni* and Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*. He was the first stage performer to become director of the royal theatres (1883–88).

The student singer “Lunkan” Lundqvist – an uncommonly strong and powerful tenor-baritone with a famously imposing frame and character – was taken from the Wagner choir and trained by Arlberg. He sang at the Royal Opera in 1869–1904 in roles including Gustaf Wasa and Kristian in Naumann's opera, Björn in *Vikingarna* and Wagner's Rienzi, Wolfram and Hans Sachs.

It is usually said of Ödmann that he marked the definitive stage breakthrough of the Nordic tenor voice. His mellifluous but initially tender voice matured under Arlberg, Günther, Hallström and Masset into a vocal type more in keeping with the male quartet. It had a two-octave range and was well balanced. Ödmann became renowned for his ability to deliver a high pitch pianissimo with full-chest power. Despite his many offers from abroad, he remained loyal to the Stockholm Opera for 35 years from 1876 to 1911, mastering such roles as Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, *Lohengrin*, Radamès in *Aida*, Raoul in *Les Huguenots*, Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, the Mountain King in *Den Bergtagna* and Otello.

Operetta

During these decades, Parisian and Viennese operetta started to conquer territory once claimed by vaudeville, which by its very nature was a more intimate form of theatre. Vaudeville made no real vocal demands, while the songs were based more on clever lyrics than on melodies and the plot – fantastical and sometimes realistic – was rarely grim or challenging. Operetta, on the other hand, especially the Parisian à la Offenbach, required more of the vocalists and musicians and was more inclined towards satire and persiflage. Unlike vaudeville and the smaller *sångspel*, it could not be billed as family entertainment, and became “audacious” and “risqué” in a way that appealed to the growing urban middle-class, which gradually abandoned the older, petty bourgeois convention.

The Offenbachian epoch began with *Orpheus in the underworld*, which was staged in Stockholm at Djurgårdsteatern in September 1860 and in Gothenburg by J.P. Roos’s troupe in December of the same year. The race for Offenbach’s crowd-pleasers only really started, however, a few years later when Stockholm was treated to a double premiere of *La belle Hélène* at Södra teatern on 11 May 1865 and at the Royal Dramatic Theatre a fortnight later. Then followed *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein* (1867), *La vie parisienne* (1868) and *Les brigands* (1869) – all at Djurgårdsteatern. Gradually, other composers began to explore this new variety of *sångspel*: Suppé, with his *Die schöne Galathée* (1868), presenting the Viennese operetta; Lecocq with *Fleur-de-thé* (1869); Johann Strauss with *Die fledermaus* (1875); Planquette with *Les cloches de Corneville* (1878); and finally *The Mikado* by Gilbert & Sullivan.

Touring companies 1860–90

In the 1850s and 60s, provincial theatre expanded as new companies appeared under Lars Erik Elffors, Isac Fredrik Smitt and Frans Ferdinand Novander, all with musical plays on their repertoires; a gradual genre specialisation then ensued over the following decades, with companies tending on the one hand towards the “dramatic” – with only spoken plays in their repertoire – or on the other towards the “lyrical”, with many specialising in either the lighter operetta and the farce-like *opera buffa*, or the somewhat heavier *sångspel* or opera. All the provincial companies of the lyrical kind had, however, a relatively mixed repertoire so that they might satisfy all tastes during their tours.

During the 1870s and 1880s, after Elffors’s death, the company continued under his widow Therèse with a great many musical plays on the repertoire, including Offenbach’s *The Princess of Trébizonde* and a couple of hit successors to *Värmlänningarna*, Fran Herberg’s *Korp-Kirsti* and Littmarck-Anrep’s *Närkingarna*. Another lyrical company was led by Knut Tivander, which inaugurated Helsingborg’s new theatre in 1877 with Flotow’s *Martha* and the following year, after the troupe had been taken over by Ludvig Otterström, Gävle Teater with *Don Cesar de Bazano*, a play by Dumanoir-Dennery, to which they adapted music by Ahlström. Other companies with operettas on the repertoire were led by Carl Otto Lindmark (1865–85), Frithiof Carlberg (1875–90), Gustaf Key (1878–85) – with both lyrical and dramatic companies – and Wilhelm Rydberg (1884–98). The finest of all the lyrical companies, however, was Carl Johan Fröberg’s, which in the years between 1869 and 1894 (except for 1877–79, and from 1884 under the direction of his son Mauritz) toured Sweden with works by Offenbach, Suppé, Millöcker, Lecocq and others.

In Gothenburg, a German opera company under Emil van der Osten played a number of current operas and *sångspels* for a total of eight months (1861–63), including Flotow’s *Martha*, Verdi’s *Il trovatore* and Rossini’s *William Tell*. Another German company under Carl Gaudelius played in Gothenburg during the winter seasons of 1864 to 1866, performing

both *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Nicolai) and *La Juive* (Halévy) – the latter a couple of years before the Stockholm premiere in 1866. From 1864, artists also guested regularly from the Royal Opera. However, over a six-year period starting in 1874, the owner of the Gothenburg theatre, tiled stove-maker August Ringnér, assembled a permanent ensemble with Carl Bernhard Hultén as chief conductor. Shying away from opera, the company confined itself to comedies, *sångspel*, operetta and vaudeville, performing amongst other titles Lecocq's *opera buffa Giroflé-Girofla* with opera star Anna De Wahl (1876) and *Martha* (1877) with Zelia Trebelli and Conrad Behrens as guest artists.

At the Royal Opera 1890–1920

For Swedish opera, these years were ones of financial woes and strikes. At the same time, it was also a time of recuperation, followed eventually by a reboot in a new opera house. With the Wagner proselytes Henneberg and Hallén employed on the podium and Axel Rundberg as répétiteur, the scene was set for the great Wagner music dramas. The new music was difficult to understand and required more rehearsals than usual, and Rundberg prepared himself for the production of *Die Walküre* in 1895 by travelling to Bayreuth. Carolina Östberg sang Sieglinde, Matilda Jungstedt Fricka and Adèle Almati Brünhilde. *Die Walküre* heralded the definitive Swedish breakthrough of the later Wagner. Over the coming 20 years, the Opera staged *Das Rheingold* (1901), *Siegfried* (1905), *Götterdämmerung* (1907), *Tristan und Isolde* (1907) and *Parsifal* (1917).

Russian operas were also now enjoying their share of success. Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta* (1893), *Eugen Onegin* (1903) and *The Queen of Spades* (1909) and Mussorgsky and Rimski-Korsakov's *Boris Godunov* (1911); Smetana's *The bartered bride* (1894), however, was a flop. There were also productions of Verdi's *Falstaff* (1896), Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana* (1890) and *L'amico Fritz* (1895), Leoncavallo's *I pagliacci* (1893), Puccini's *La Bohème* (1901) and *Tosca* (1904), both with Anna Oscàr, and *Madame Butterfly* (1908) in Davida Hesse's famous interpretation. Massenet's *Manon* (1896) and Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Dalila* (1903), with Matilda Jungstedt, were the most-performed new French works. Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* (1895) was a huge hit, and Richard Strauss was introduced with *Salome* (1908), in which the former ballet dancer Anna Oscàr was also able to execute a professional dance of the seven-veils, and, at length, *Den Rosenkavalier* (1920).

While all this was going on, there was a great flourishing of Swedish opera production. But Swedish opera was not the only one to employ the Viking theme. The Norwegian *Sven Orädd* by Ole Olsen was performed by the composer in 1892 and the Danish *Vikingablod* by P.E. Lange-Müller was played in 1904. The 1890s was a period of transition as singers vacillated between old and new ideals. Views concerning the purpose of the music, the vocal declamation, the action and the design changed as Wagner's concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* took root. The director became a contributory artist in a completely new way, and the visual design an integral part of the drama. At the same time, much more was also demanded of audiences, who had grown accustomed to regarding ballet and machinery as essential ingredients of an entertaining show, and who wanted tunes to whistle on the way home and a moderate amount of vocal acrobatics to applaud. Amongst the heated and typical controversies of the period, the *Carmen*-row of 1897 and the many clashes between John Forsell and Peterson-Berger had profound ramifications. In Sweden, the prevailing mentality was one taste at a time, and there was no room for both a John Forsell and a Peterson-Berger – the virtuoso and diva versus the ensemble- and *Gesamtkunstwerk* zealot.

The *Carmen*-row centred on Dina Edling's and Adèle Almati's classic conception of the role based on the original created by the French mezzo Célestine Galli-Marié – the butterfly-like child of nature that never overstepped the bounds of good taste and confined herself to

insinuations and discreet elegancies – versus Matilda Jungstedt’s intelligent, realistic, gypsy woman, smouldering with passion, felinity and desire (inspired by Signe Hebbe and Pauline Lucca). Jungstedt won, prompting Edling’s husband, director Axel Rundberg, to quit the Opera. Towards the end of the period, a new form of directorial art was introduced by Harald André, who had taken his inspiration from Adolph Appia and Gordon Craig.

Singing training and singers, 1890–1920

Baritones Oscar Lejdström and Gillis Bratt were Günther’s and Arlberg’s successors as leading singing teachers; Bratt was also the first voice doctor. Bearing in mind the many singers who approached him with vocal tension from a background as men’s choir singers in Uppsala, their work focused heavily on physiological tension-reducing exercises, as their own writings relate (Lejdström 1928; Bratt 1916). With soft intonation and relaxed vocal chords, the voices were trained to be bigger and richer, although at the expense of agility, since the two cannot be reconciled. Towards the end of the period, they were also joined by Karl Nygren-Kloster.

The most significant female teachers were Paula Frödin-Lizell and Anna Bergström-Simonsson, the latter a student of Ellen Bergman and a particularly outstanding speech pedagogue (at the Music Conservatory 1902–21). Like Bratt, she believed that a well-trained speaking voice should be the basis of all singing training and her textbook (*Taltekhniska övningar* from 1917), which was still in print by as late as 1961, was the conduit of Signe Hebbe’s deportment theories. Leading singers were mezzo-sopranos Matilda Jungstedt, Liva Edström-Järnefelt and Nanny Larsén-Todsen, coloratura soprano Anna Oscår and alto Julia Claussen. On the male side were John Forsell, Åke Wallgren and Emile Stiebel (baritone) and David Stockman (tenor).

Matilda Jungstedt, Signe Hebbe’s foremost student, was Sweden’s first real great mezzo, most applauded for her interpretations of Orpheus (Glück) and Carmen (Bizet); Liva Edström’s Carmen was also praised. Anna Oscår was Sweden’s first Salome and a famous Vaino in *Arnljot*. Nanny Larsén-Todsen and Julia Claussen were renowned Wagner singers both inside and outside Sweden.

Forsell, a student of Günther, was a famous Don Giovanni, Count in *The marriage of Figaro*, and Flying Dutchman, and the first Scarpia in *Tosca*. Wallgren sang Wagner’s Wotan parts and Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger*. Stiebel was a great *buffa* singer – notable amongst his roles being Bartolo in *The barber of Seville*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni* and Löpar-Nisse in *Värmlänningarna*. Stockman, finally, with his light, lyrical tenor, was the heir of Arnoldson and Ödmann. He was a very versatile singer, and appeared both as Hoffman in *Tales of Hoffman* and Lohengrin. Some of the leading singers also toured outside the country (see below).

As international mobility increased in the early 1900s, and due in part to disaffection or a lack of offers at home, many Swedish singers made significant appearances abroad, such as at the New York Metropolitan.

Theatre king Ranft – touring companies 1890–1920

The proliferation of new theatres provided scenes for plays with music, *sångspel*, operettas, the odd opera, as well as *variété* shows and the new form of vaudeville known as revue. In the 1800s, agents appeared on the continent offering plays in the form of pre-packaged kits complete with sheet music, directorial instructions and sets. The trade in “rights” to these works evolved into an industry, and with the purchase of many rights came the need of more theatres and a “stable” of artists. England in particular was home to such theatrical empires.

Sweden had its own theatre mogul in the shape of Albert Ranft, who after a long career as an actor, first acquired Djurgårdsteatern in 1892 and then a long list of other Stockholm

venues: Vasateatern (1895), Svenska teatern (1898), Södra teatern (1900), the newly built Oscarsteatern (1906), Alhambrateatern (1919) and Mosebacke revyteater (1920). He also owned for briefer periods Arenateatern (1895–97) and Östermalmsteatern (1903–04) and even leased the Opera itself in 1908–10 with Wilhelm Peterson-Berger as director. Ranft was also the owner of Gothenburg's Stora teatern between 1899 and 1920. Accompanying this theatrical empire was a host of actors, singers and musicians that needed employment.

Ranft also organised several provincial tours until his bankruptcy in 1925, mainly by a dramatic and a lyrical company, which dominated the top theatres in Malmö and Gothenburg (where they alternated performances) during the 1910s. For many years, the chief conductor was Fredrik Tobiaeson. Following the resounding success of *The Merry Widow* at Oscarsteatern in 1906, Ranft devoted much of his energies to operetta, staging such classics as Lehár's *Der Graf von Luxemburg* and some now-forgotten works like *Hoheit tanzt Walzer* by Leo Ascher (26 times in Gothenburg 1919); he also had his lyrical company under Tobiaeson perform works such as *Carmen*, *La bohème*, *La fille du regiment* and *I pagliacci*.

There were also touring lyrical companies beyond the Ranftian empire, many of them opera, which introduced many of the best-known operas to audiences around the country: *Orpheus and Eurydice*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Barber of Seville*, *La fille du regiment*, *Mignon*, *Undine*, *La dame blanche*, *Martha*, *Le Chalet*, *Un giorno di regno*, *Fra Diavolo*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Faust*, *Il trovatore*, *Rigoletto*, *La traviata*, *Carmen*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *I pagliacci* (see Hillberg 1948, p. 109 f.). Norwegian Bjarne Lund's opera company was one of the most important (1885–88), followed by music director Carl Herbold's from 1887 and baritone Oscar Lomberg's from 1897. Opera tours were also made by Hjalmar Selander's lyrical troupe, Richard Lundin, Carl Carlander and Sigurd Hagman – collectively or individually – and Emil Linden, Matilda Jungstedt, Anna Norrie (also operettas) and the artists of the Royal Opera. The music was usually played on a piano, sometimes supported by other instruments, and the action set against local scenery using the companies' own props.

The foremost operetta company was led by Sigrid Eklöf-Trobäck (1908–18), who went on to become director of the newly formed “Centraloperett”, which arranged tours in special “folk” parks – the first of which was established in Malmö in 1891. Other companies were led by Anton Salmson (1904–15), Axel Lindblad (1905–15) and Axel Hansson (1915–18), offering a repertoire that was as much *Carmen* as it was modern operettas like *Die Kino-Königin* (Gilbert), *Gipsy Love* (Lehár) and *Die Dollarprinzessin* (Fall).

Revues

Some companies, such as John Liander's and Oscar Textorius's companies in the early 1900s, specialised in revues. The Swedish New Year revue had been created by Blanche and Mauritz Cramær in the 1840s. Later came, amongst other shows, Franz Hodell's “nyårsskämt” (lit. New Year joke) *Odödlighetens temple* (1869) at Södra teatern. In the 1870s and 1880s revues were staged by Ernst Wallmark and Selfrid Kinmansson, in the 90s by Harald Leipziger and Emil Norlander, who had his first success with Vasateatern's 1894 New Year revue *I ballong* with music arranged by Herman Berens (the younger). Norlander began to revise the concept, transforming a jocular summation of the past year into a more coherent narrative of common life filled with song and dance. *Den stora strejken* (Södra teatern 1899) launched Helfrid Lambert and Hildegard Ohlson, who sang “Kväsarvalsen”, an unaffected number noted down by Artur Högstedt. The big hit was *Den förgyllda lergöken* (Kristallsalongen 1900), which according in Norlander's own reckoning was played about 1,500 times in Stockholm and the provinces in different versions by different companies between 1900 and 1921. Most of all these revues were single act shows; the first full-length review was probably Norlander's *Damen med masken* (Södra teatern 1903).

Gothenburg had its own Norlander in the shape of Axel Engdahl and his New Year revues. As director of Folkteatern (as well as an author) he alternated his reviews with operettas and plays. Although there was doubtless much local talent in many towns and cities, a comprehensive inventory of the nation's theatres has, unfortunately, never been compiled.

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PREMISES FOR DRAMA AND MUSIC ESTABLISHED BEFORE 1833

<i>Year</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Building</i>	<i>History</i>
1776	Stockholm	Börshuset, the grand hall	
1779	Gothenburg	Komedi-huset on Sillgatan	Demolished 1819, rebuilt Mindre teater 1820, upholstery workshop 1845, demolished 1900
1781	Karlskrona	Teater (Västerudd)	Built 1880, closed 1939
1782	Stockholm	Royal Theatre (Opera)	Closed 1806-09, demolished 1892, rebuilt 1898
1785	Gävle	Gamla teatern	Converted into an auction house 1839 (see 1840)
1795	Linköping	Theatre in the riding school	
1798	Norrköping	Teaterhus	Demolished 1859 (see 1850)
1800	Nyköping	Komedihuset	On Knipgatan. Used sporadically after 1802
1801	Stockholm	Djugårdsteatern	(The Bröen theatre) Demolished 1863 (see 1864)
1806	Linköping	Assemblé-och teaterhuset (St Larsgatan)	
1809	Malmö	Teater	Renovated 1868, fire-damaged and restored 1881, closed 1936
1816	Gothenburg	Teater, S. Hamngatan	Converted 1860 into a warehouse and concert hall, destroyed by fire 1892 (see 1859)
1817	Helsingborg	Teaterlada	Moved c. 1855; demolished 1876. New 1877 (see list for that year)
Before 1820?	Stockholm	The Kirstein House on Klara Strandgata and by Munkbron	
1825	Jönköping	Teater	Demolished 1903, rebuilt 1904
1826	Vadstena	Theatre premises in farmhouse annex	
1828	Karlstad	Teater	Destroyed by fire 1865
1829	Falun	Teater	Renovated 1903
1830	Eskilstuna	Teater	Lars Widlund's grain storehouse. Used for a couple of decades. Re-opened as a theatre in 1989
Before 1833	Kristianstad	The Högström barn	Replaced by a theatre in 1833

PREMISES FOR DRAMA AND MUSIC ESTABLISHED 1832 – 59

<i>Year</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Building</i>	<i>History</i>
1832	Stockholm	Vauxhallen, Djurgården	<i>Schweizerei</i> , then Novilla varieté, in the 1900s a film studio
1833	Nyköping	Teaterlada	By V. Trädgårdsgatan. Bought by the Order of Good Templars in 1883
1833	Kristianstad	Teater	Renovated 1883. Sold 1903 (building preserved)
1840	Gävle	Teater	Destroyed by fire 1869 (see 1785 and 1878)
1841	Uppsala	Teater	Renovated 1866, demolished 1938
1842	Stockholm	Nya teatern	From 1846 called Mindre teatern. From 1863 the Royal Dramatic Theatre, closed 1907, demolished 1910
1843	Borås	Teater (Rydins Teater)	Closed 1873, demolished 1931
1843	Mariestad	Teater	Renovated 1924
1844	Stockholm	De la Croix's etablissement	With auditorium. 1865–66, Folkteatern, closed 1869, demolished 1913
1845	Eskilstuna	Tobaksladan	Used until 1925. Demolished at the end of the decade
1846	Stockholm	Villa Diorama	Closed 1852
1849	Gothenburg	Börshuset	With concert hall (and theatre?). Restored 1952
1849	Växjö	Teater	
1850	Norrköping	Eklundska teatern	Demolished 1905, rebuilt 1908
1851	Stockholm	Humlegårdsteatern	Built 1850 as a dance salon. Closed 1875, demolished 1877
1851	Lund	Akademiska Föreningen	With auditorium. Extended 1880.
1852	Stockholm	Teater	In Davidsons norra paviljong on Drottninggatan. Closed c. 1870
1853	Örebro	Teater	Destroyed by fire 1882, rebuilt 1889, closed 1936, re-opened 1976
1853	Umeå	Teaterlada vid Badstugan	Renovated in the 1860s and 1880s. Destroyed by fire 1888
1853	Stockholm	Södra teatern	Destroyed by fire 1857, rebuilt 1859, renovated 1899, Cooperative Society 1957, Teater- och Musikrådet 1966, Riksteatern 1972
1856	Stockholm	Ladugårdslandetsteatern	Located on Östermalm. Folkteatern from 1887, demolished 1904
1857	Stockholm	Teatern på Södermalm	Closed 1859
1859	Gothenburg	Nya teatern	From 1880 Stora teatern

PREMISES FOR DRAMA AND MUSIC ESTABLISHED 1861 – 88

<i>Year</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Building</i>	<i>History</i>
1861	Stockholm	Manège-teatern	Built 1849 as Mothanders menège, Djurgård circus. Demolished 1890
1862	Uddevalla	Teater	Destroyed by fire 1958
1863	Kalmar	Teater	
1863	Stockholm	Berns salonger	Auditorium for concerts and theatre
1864	Stockholm	Nya teatern on Djurgården	Destroyed by fire 1865, rebuilt 1867, destroyed by fire 1929
1864	Stockholm	Artilleriteatern	In Kronobagariet. For military amateur actors. Closed c. 1880?
1867	Stockholm	Nya teatern	Hammerska Ladan. From 1868 Mindre teatern, demolished 1884
1869	Vänersborg	Teater in Stadshotellet	Converted 1940
1869	Karlstad	Teater	In the Exposition building on Hamntorget. Used for other purposes from 1875
1870	Stockholm	Alhambra-salongen	On Djurgården. Built as restaurant Pohlsro in the 1860s. Theatre 1871-73, then variété, destroyed by fire 1918
1873	Borås	Teater	Renovated 1900, closed 1975, demolished 1983
1875	Stockholm	Nya teatern	On Blasieholmen. From 1888 Svenska teatern. Converted 1891 to accommodate the Opera 1892-98, then Svenska teatern, destroyed by fire 1925.
1876	Gothenburg	Teater	In the Friendly Society building on Järntorget. Renovated 1883, rebuilt 1909 as Nya teatern, from 1925 cinema
1877	Helsingborg	Nya teatern	Replaced Teaterladan from 1817
1878	Gävle	Nya teatern	(See 1781 and 1840)
1878	Karlstad	Yhnellska teatern	Closed 1890
1878	Stockholm	Blanch-teatern	(After Theodor Blanch.) From 1881 Vaudeville-teatern, from 1883 art gallery, from 1901 cinema, from 1916 Blanche-teatern (after August Blanche), demolished 1962
1880	Karlskrona	Teater	Replaced the old theatre from 1781. Closed 1939
1881	Söderhamn	Teater	
1882	Hudiksvall	Teater	
1883	Östersund	Teater	Renovated 1947
1884	Nyköping	Teater	Renovated 1929
1884	Stockholm	Godtemplar rooms	(On Kungsholmen.) 1888-92 Kungsholms-teatern, then factory, demolished 1972
1886	Stockholm	Vasateatern	Renovated 1892
1887	Stockholm	Mosebacke etablissement	With auditorium. Demolished 1939
1888	Stockholm	Nya Cirkus on Östermalm	From 1900 Olympia-teatern, from 1904 Östermalmsteatern, from 1909 Operett-teatern, from 1910 dance hall, destroyed by fire 1913
1888	Stockholm	Sveasalen	From 1890 variété. In the same building, Sveateater from 1894, hall and theatre destroyed by fire 1899, Sveateatern took over neighbouring building, demolished 1913 (to make way for the new Nordiska Kompaniet department store)

PREMISES FOR DRAMA AND MUSIC ESTABLISHED 1891 – 1916

<i>Year</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Building</i>	<i>History</i>
1891	Stockholm	Cirkus, Djurgården	1895–97 Arenateatern
1891	Gothenburg	Allambra-teatern, variété	From 1897 Folkteatern
1893	Karlstad	Teater	(see 1828, 1869 and 1878)
1894	Ystad	Teater	
1894	Sundsvall	Teater	
1895	Varberg	Teater	
1896	Karlshamn	Teater	
1897	Halmstad	Teater	
1897	Malmberget	Theatre in Folkets Hus	Renovated 1928
1901	Landskrona	Teater	
1902	Bollnäs	Teater	
1902	Stockholm	Folkets Hus	With theatre from 1910
1902	Kristinehamn	Teater	
1903	Linköping	Teater	
1905	Skara	Teater	Destroyed by fire 1981
1906	Kristianstad	Nya Teatern	
1906	Stockholm	Oscarsteatern	
1907	Umeå	Teater	Destroyed by fire 1913
1908	Sandviken	Teater	
1908	Stockholm	Royal Dramatic Theatre	
1911	Stockholm	Skansens friluftsteater	
1911	Ronneby	Teater	
1911	Skellefteå	Teater	
1913	Laholm	Teater	
1914	Luleå	Teater	
1915	Västerås	Teater	
1915	Nynäshamn	Teater	(Folkets Hus)
1916	Gothenburg	Lorensbergsteatern	From 1934 cinema