

Selv om bogen er en typisk 'Liv og værk'-skildring, er der ingen tvivl om, at forfatteren har følt sig mest kaldet til at fremlægge den biografiske side af sagen, medens behandlingen af selve musikken mere har karakter af pligtarbejde. Ikke alle genrer gennemgås lige udførligt, især står kammermusikken påfaldende svagt. Værkanalyserne tilhører den deskriptive takt-for-takt analysemetode, derimod går Inger Sørensen ikke ind i en mere principiel diskussion af Hartmanns bud på helt centrale formproblemer som fx sonateformen. Og det er en skam. For skønt det er almindeligt kendt, at Hartmann udviklede sin musikalske stil hele livet, foreligger der stadig ikke en fyldestgørende beskrivelse af, hvori denne udvikling bestod.

Et alvorligt savn er fraværet af en egentlig værkfortegnelse. Det, der ifølge indholdsfortegnelsen (s. 5) anføres som "Værkregister" og som på s. 643 bærer overskriften "Register over værker af familien Hartmann", viser sig nemlig kun at være et alfabetisk titelindeks over værker, som er nævnt i bogen. Det nærmeste man kommer en værkfortegnelse er en tidstavle fra 1726 til 1900, hvor begivenheder i Hartmannslægten opregnes side om side med værktitler.

I betragtning af at bogen er blevet til med støtte af Statens Humanistiske Forskningsråd og derfor må forventes at have karakter af en videnskabelig fremstilling, forekommer det noget problematisk, at Inger Sørensen bogstavelig talt ikke forholder sig til den hidtidige Hartmann-forskning, som fx Angul Hammerichs og Richard Hoves monografier fra hhv. 1916 og 1934. Og det virker i denne forbindelse ganske uforståeligt, at Lisbeth Ahlgren Jensens konferensspeciale, *Emma Hartmann. Kvinde og komponist i den borgerlige musikkultur* (København 1988), angiveligt ikke skulle have været til disposition. Ikke mindre må det undre, at Lothar Brix' dissertation, *Die Klaviermusik von Johann Peter Emilius Hartmann. Ein Beitrag zur musikalischen Romantik in Skandinavien* (Göttingen 1971), end ikke er nævnt i den afsluttende litteraturliste. Dette afholder dog ikke forfatteren fra at citere Brix tre gange på siderne 262 og 269 uden nogen form for dokumentation. Det sidste må naturligvis bero på en fejltagelse og er øjensynlig et udtryk for, at bogen er blevet til under stort tidspres (skulle bogen være klar til 100-året for J.P.E. Hartmanns død?). I det hele taget er bogen langt fra fri for skønhedspletter, fx kunne man godt have ønsket sig lidt større ortografisk konsekvens, ligesom den af-

sluttende litteraturliste burde have været efterset en sidste gang inden trykningen. Så var Weyses breve nok ikke blevet placeret under C – det første af Weyses initialer. Blandt oversigten over anvendte aviser og tidsskrifter mangler desuden *Magazin der Musik*, som omtales s. 40.

Sproget er nøgternt, til tider lidt tungt. Følgende sætning skulle nærværende anmelder i det mindste læse to gange, før han var helt med: "De sidste år af sit liv var Ludwig Hartmann overgraver ved Garnisons Kirke, hvor hans yngre bror, August Wilhelm, var organist, og ved Ludwigs død i 1831 tog denne sig af enken, kaldet "Tante Jette", der i mange år havde et institut for piger og i sine sidste år boede hos nevøen J.P.E. Hartmann, efter at dennes første kone var død i 1851 til sin egen død otte år senere" (s. 47-48). Så skulle det vist være på plads!

Bogen er rigt illustreret med både sort-hvide- og farve-reproduktioner. Ikke mindst har det været overordentligt interessant at få lejlighed til her at se mange af de familieportrætter, som i dag er i privateje.

Til trods for en ganske imponerende indsamling af primært biografisk materiale, lykkes det ikke at rigtigt for forfatteren at ændre eller tilføje væsentlige aspekter til det allerede kendte J.P.E. Hartmann-billede. Men først og fremmest savner man en grundigere og mere perspektiverende analyse af værkerne. En sådan ville kunne etablere en musikalsk fundering af postulatet om Hartmann som værende ikke blot en samlende skikkelse i det 19. århundredes danske musikliv men også en betydelig komponist, hvis værker kan bære ud over markeringen af 100-året for hans død.

Niels Bo Foltmann

¹ Inger Sørensen (ed.): *J.P.E. Hartmann og hans kreds. En komponistfamilies breve 1780-1859*, København 1999. Anmeldt i *Dansk Årbog for Musikforskning* 27 (1999), s. 104-5.

Steen Chr. Steensen: *Musik er liv. En biografi om Carl Nielsen*. Fisker og Schou, Frederiksberg 1999. 388 s., ill., noder, ISBN 87-90057-95-3. Inkl. 3 cd'er: *Carl Nielsen. De seks symfonier*. London Symphony Orchestra, dir. Ole Schmidt. Kr. 398.

Steen Chr. Steensen's biography of Carl Nielsen begins with the controversy following the celebrations for the composer's sixtieth birthday in 1925. It is now widely accepted that the poignant

contradiction between Carl Nielsen's institutionalisation as Denmark's national composer and his apparent failure to be recognised as a figure of international importance coloured both the tone and substance of his later works. The subsequent reception of Carl Nielsen's music has been more positive: the decision to highlight Carl Nielsen's work in the prestigious 1999 BBC Promenade Concert Series, for example, illustrates the extent to which his music has established a central place in the concert repertoire. Steen Chr. Steensen's new biography appears in a climate of renewed critical and scholarly activity, so that Carl Nielsen's music finally seems to be gaining the acclaim that it properly deserves.

At the same time, the critical reception of Carl Nielsen's work continues to follow a familiar pattern. Despite the decentrist rhetoric of much recent writing on music, received lines of historical inquiry remain trapped within an exclusive mainstream-periphery dualism. The relative lack of detailed technical work on his music, for instance, points to certain trends in the current academic climate, and to the prevailing sense of music-historical orthodoxy that continues to marginalise the work of composers such as Carl Nielsen. If Steensen's book paves the way for a deeper critical engagement with Carl Nielsen's music, it is to be enthusiastically welcomed. There is a danger, however, that biographical surveys of the kind exemplified by Steensen's book might inadvertently perpetuate the critical localism that has hitherto hindered progress in Carl Nielsen research. In that sense, Steensen's work unintentionally reinforces the localist reception that his introduction seeks to critique.

The starting point for the main part of Steensen's book is Carl Nielsen's oft-quoted motto for the Fourth Symphony, "Musik er liv" (p. 9). Herein lies both the book's strength and weakness. With the exception of the introductory first chapter, the book discusses Carl Nielsen's life and work in strictly chronological order. The early part is perhaps over-reliant on *Min fynske Barndom* as a primary source of information about Carl Nielsen's early childhood (pp. 32ff.). Knud Ketting's forthcoming large-scale biography of Carl Nielsen might be able to offer an accurate assessment of the book's reliability as an autobiographical sketch. Arguably, however, *Min fynske Barndom* is better read as a particularly successful exemplar of a

specific literary genre, rather than as a factual account of the composer's childhood.

It is the continual reference to the book's motto, "Musik er liv" that is the most problematic aspect of Steensen's account. His reading of Carl Nielsen's work rests firmly on the assumption that there is a direct and inviolable link between a composer's life and her music (p. 19). We need only review Carl Dahlhaus' analysis of biographical methodology in his book, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Approaches to his Music* (Oxford 1991, pp. 1-42), to realise the extent to which statements of this kind are, in some sense, self-evidently true. Problems arise when they form the basis for a complete hermeneutic treatment of the musical work. Steensen's suggestion that we should hear the opening of the Fourth Symphony as a motto for the composer and his wife (via its emphasis on the pitches *c* and *a*, for Carl and Anne Marie) (pp. 226-27) is a particularly contentious example of such critical practice.

Steensen's book nevertheless contains some valuable new research, especially from the collections of letters to colleagues such as Ture Rangström held in the Royal Library in Copenhagen. Steensen quotes in full a hitherto unpublished letter from Svend Godske-Nielsen, for example, that sheds new light on the Marie Møller affair at the time of the Fourth Symphony (pp. 215-19). Likewise, an anguished letter from Carl Nielsen to his daughter Anne-Marie and her husband Emil Telmányi dated 14 September 1919 about his forthcoming legal separation from Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen reveals the intense emotional pressure that Carl Nielsen worked through following the affair (pp. 222-23). For international readers, the letters will certainly come as a shock. Elsewhere, however, Steensen's book appears to have dragged behind recent Carl Nielsen research. It is striking, that Steensen makes little mention of Jørgen I. Jensen's provocative reading of *Saul og David* as an autobiographical work. Here is one of the most explicit parables of the young modern artist achieving his controversial aesthetic breakthrough at the expense of a venerable, but ultimately redundant establishment. The message of the opera is certainly ambivalent, but, despite the apparently objective premise of his biography, Steensen's discussion (pp. 110-23) serves to illustrate how such accounts are no more or less subjective than other kinds of historical or

analytical writing. Likewise, we might point to the level of annotation throughout Steensen's book. Alongside John Fellow's recent book, *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid* (Copenhagen 1999), for example, the documentary material in Steensen's account seems unusually sparse.

The limitations of Steensen's work are most apparent, however, in his discussion of Carl Nielsen's individual musical syntax. The treatment of modality in the second movement of the E^b Quartet is a good example (p. 111). The use of antique modal inflections is hardly a radical gesture in early-twentieth century music: indeed, it almost amounted to a common early-Modernist harmonic practice. What makes Nielsen's music remarkable, on the contrary, is his use of diatonicism, and the extent to which notions of diatonic harmonic consonance and dissonance remain operational within his work. Time and again, Nielsen finds novel ways of reinterpreting the concept of structural dissonance, and in terms of large-scale formal control he is arguably one of the most innovative and consistently successful composers in the twentieth-century repertoire. Similarly, Steensen's comparison between the final movement of the *Sinfonia Espansiva* and the music of Elgar is a worthwhile point, particularly given the contemporaneity of Elgar's Second Symphony and Nielsen's Third (p. 196). But, surely, the differences are more striking than the resemblances: Elgar's symphony works towards a nostalgic reminiscence of earlier more turbulent material, whereas Nielsen's finale achieves a uniquely positive and uplifting affirmation of a simple tonic triad. Significantly, it is impossible to imagine Nielsen ever ending a symphonic work with an epilogue, just as it is hard to imagine him ever writing the kind of ritual ceremonial music ("Pomp and Circumstance") with which Elgar is conventionally associated.

The strength of Steensen's biography lies in its commitment to a highly individualised reading of Carl Nielsen's career. As such, it is an account that all serious Carl Nielsen scholars will seek to read. But in its comprehensiveness, the keener details of Steensen's interpretative view of Carl Nielsen's work are lost. The amount of ground that the book tries to cover may also account for some of the errors that appear to have crept into the text at the production stage. For example, 'Beckstein' should presumably read 'Bechstein' (p. 131); the photograph caption on p. 201 lists Bror Beckmann and Peder Møller in

the wrong order; the photograph of the concert hall in Göteborg (p. 250) states that it was burnt down in 1937, whereas the text suggests that the fire occurred in 1927; the spelling of Bartók's name (p. 264) is incorrect.

All too often, there is a sense of over-familiar historical territory precisely at those moments where Carl Nielsen appears to be at his most complex and daring. Unless we are prepared to engage with works such as the Second Violin Sonata, the solo Violin works, the Sixth Symphony and the Clarinet Concerto at deeper levels of musical structure and meaning, our understanding of Carl Nielsen's music will never become fully balanced and complete.

Daniel M. Grimley

Hans Weisethaunet: *The Performance of Everyday Life. The Gaine of Nepal* (Acta Humaniora 44). Universitetsforlaget/Scandinavian University Press, Oslo 1998. 342 pp., ill., ISBN 82-00-12991-8.

The Nepalese Blues, The Real Folk Music of Nepal. Performances and Narratives of the Wandering Gaine Musicians (Compiled by Hans Weisethaunet). Travelling Records, Oslo 1997. TR-001-2 (1 cd with booklet, 24 pp.).

Among Nepali speaking people two low castes, *Gaine* and *Damai*, supply professional musicians. The materials reviewed here, a doctoral thesis defended at the Oslo University and a compact disc (available separately) compiled by the same author, refer to the living oral music tradition by the *Gaine* wandering bards in Central and West Nepal. Early written sources about their activities are from the late 18th century, their genealogy and the instruments used indicate Indian origin. Acting as a kind of singing newspaper, these professionals perform lyrics, *karkha* (heroic ballads and prize songs with political and private contents), to instrumental accompaniment of the short-necked fiddle, *sarangi* (with small bells attached to the bow), or long-necked lute, *arbajo*, and occasionally to the double-headed barrel drum, *madal* (using four different strokes). *Gaine* music, like *Damai*, *Gurung*, *Nevari*, and *Tamang*, is one of the few Nepalese traditions which has been described already, while others, e.g. *Rai*, *Magar*, and *Tharu*, still need basic research.

Weisethaunet's investigation is based on his own fieldwork, carried out in 1988, 1991, 1993,