

for en række andre europæiske konservatorier, blandt andet det i København. Hvorvidt denne bog også udspringer af hendes dissertation, fremgår ikke.

Wasserloos har med sin sammenligning af musiklivet i København og Leipzig uden tvivl fat i en spændende problemstilling. Samtidig har hun fat i væsentligt nyt stof i den biografiske del, især hvad angår Horneman. Alligevel er det synd, at hun lader spørgsmålet om dannelse af musikkulturel identitet i begge byer totalt underordne sig de to biografiske fremstillinger af komponisterne. Muligvis ville en anden redigering af stoffet i de to bøger kunne give et klarere billede. Bogen om konservatoriet kunne være udvidet, da der er sammenfald med afsnittet om konservatoriet i Leipzig i den anden bog. Man kunne så have redigeret nærværende bog sådan at en sammenlignende analyse af musikkulturerne i Leipzig og København stod stærkest. Hvis forfatteren som en del af dette inddrog kilder om forholdet mellem national identitet og musik i de to byer og så dem i et større perspektiv, kunne der uden tvivl – også set i lyset af dagens nationale strømninger – været kommet en mere spændende og måske også mere nytænkende bog ud af det.

Peter E. Nissen



Ole Nørlyng (ed.), *Dansen er en kunst. Bourmonville – den levende tradition* (Dance is an Art: August Bournonville – the living tradition) Århus: Det Schönbergske Forlag, 2005, 380 pp., illus., ISBN 87-570-1673-9, incl. 9 CD's, *Musikken til Bournonvilles balletter / Music to the Bournonville Ballets*, Aalborg Symphony Orchestra, cond. Peter Ernst Lassen, Danacord 631-639. DKK 499. All text in English and Danish.

Perhaps it was unrealistic to hope that everything performed, presented and published during 2005 for the bicentenaries of H.C. Andersen, J.P.E. Hartmann and August Bournonville would be wonderful. As it turned out, we had a good lesson in human nature last year: the bicentenarians with the most loyal supporters, those for whom commercial success was not the primary goal, achieved great things, and poor H.C. Andersen was exploited and spoiled to death. Most disappointing of all, a tremendous opportunity to promote Danish culture in general to the world beyond these shores was largely wasted: only those who knew where to look, and what to look for, found gold.

Some of the disappointments were worthy attempts, not the result of unmitigated hubris: a great deal of material was published about Bournonville, some of it decent and some compromised by poor standards (like the dreadful inaccuracies and poor editing of the English translation of Ditlev Tamm's biography of the choreographer, not his fault but his publisher's).

Three grand publications stand out from the rest as the great achievements of 2005: the beautiful score of *Liden Kirsten*, J.P.E. Hartmann's and H.C. Andersen's opera (The Hartmann Edition IV, 1, ed. Inger Sørensen and Niels Krabbe, Copenhagen: The Royal Library, 2005); the 2 books and 2 DVDs *The Bournonville School* based on Kirsten Ralov's 1979 publication but now superbly realised as a resource for dancers and students of Bournonville (ed. Anne Marie Vessel Schlüter, Copenhagen: The Royal Theatre, 2005); and the book under consideration here, *Dansen er en kunst*, edited by Ole Nørlyng.

More than any other contribution to critical study this year, this book aspires to support the better understanding of its subject by careful, thorough probing of the context and content of its subject, and its aspirations are almost fully achieved.

To the qualifications first: perhaps the kindest thing to do is to draw a polite veil over the recordings which accompany the book. Although the project began, I think, in Jesper Buhl's

admirable ambition to record all the scores used by Bournonville (in fact those actually presented here are those which survive in modern performing tradition at The Royal Danish Theatre), the recording quality is disappointing even though the performances directed by Peter Ernst Lassen are lively and securely founded in his long experience of theatrical performing practice. Unfortunately, even when played at a higher volume than your neighbours might wish, the recordings sound as though the orchestra is playing in next door's living room, not your own. Balletomanes will, perhaps, enjoy the comfortable and familiar untidiness of some moments as authentic reminders of happy times in the theatre, but these recordings do not compete with others already available. We must hope that the missing scores, notably J.P.E. Hartmann's *The Lay of Thrym* (*Thrymskviden*), have better luck when they are, as they surely must be soon, recorded.

It is a shame, too, that the graphic designers responsible for the book's presentation did not have the courage of the publishers and editor in advertising the presence of full English translations more openly on the book's cover and title page. Too many English-speakers who might otherwise buy this book may not realize from its appearance that they are very well provided for, with idiomatic and impeccably proof-read translations of every single word of the text, including the captions to the illustrations.

But this book's standing will depend on the value of its content, and it will, on that account, stand very high: indeed, no library, whether private or public, should be without a copy.

First the illustrations. As anyone aware of Ole Nørlyng's multifaceted life as art historian and teacher at the Royal Ballet School as well as musicologist will hope, the illustrations are drawn from a very wide range of sources, theatrical performance, fine art, documentary: all quite literally illuminating. That they are extremely well printed and informatively captioned, as well as carefully chosen to illustrate the adjacent text, adds to their value here.

But Ole Nørlyng's success in selection applies to his choice of contributing authors, too. His own essays include a biographical sketch which is all the better for being compact and equipped with a well-selected chronology of Bournonville's life and works; 'Music drives the Dance', one of the best accounts any choreographer has been privileged to inspire of his music and musicality, which covers the whole range of Bournonville's work including opera and light music as well as each of the surviving ballets in some detail, and ends with a brilliant exposition of the 'musicality of the style' of the dance itself; an excellent, helpful for being so directly personal, interview with the conductor of the CDs, Peter Ernst Lassen; and a predictably but constructively provocative envoi addressing Bournonville's future, co-authored with the redoubtable Anne Middelboe Christensen. Throughout Nørlyng's writing, one recognizes the hand of a skilled and experienced communicator, concerned to stimulate and engage as well as to inform. What he says of Bournonville is as true of his own writing: 'This is the heart of the matter: to transform what is difficult into what appears to be effortless' (p. 253). This is learning worn lightly, and all the better for it.

Monna Dithmer's article here, 'The shadows behind the sunny poet – or how to keep a woman under control?', is a classic production: it contains enough wisps of insight and truth to be genuinely worthwhile, thoroughly stimulating and refreshingly serious in its address to our perception of gender issues in the art of the mid-nineteenth century. These may not be the most important things to find in Bournonville's ballets, but not knowing that they are there, or that they contribute significantly to the ballets' meanings, really does detract from a full understanding of the choreographer's work, so 'bravo, Monna', for saying something that needed to be said, and encouraging a spirit and tone of disputatious glee that raises the quality of debate about dance towards a level it deserves.

Charlotte Christensen's 'Wide Horizons' surveys Bournonville's world beyond ballet, showing him both as traveller and as journalist, bringing the best and most interesting of his

experiences back to Copenhagen to entertain an audience avid for anything new and intriguing, that sits well near Katja Jepsen's useful study of 'Bournonville and Danish national identity in the nineteenth century'.

Between them lies Birthe Johansen's 'Dance and Politics, Bournonville and *Far from Denmark* in the 1850s—a time of national tension'. This provides a helpful insight into Bournonville as a politically alert and active citizen, but rises beyond the ordinary to a brilliantly valuable account of the economic side of his role as ballet master and the place of the ballet in the Danish state. She uses material from Bournonville's *My Theatre Life* (which surely cannot remain out of print?) in the context of a discussion, otherwise unavailable in English, of the emerging cultural politics of Denmark after 1848 and makes an indispensable contribution to Bournonville studies in so doing. At last, here is a critical account of an aesthetic treasure that doesn't treat it as though it emerged from a 'Kingdom of [Cultural] Sweets' (a reference to Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*), but from a society that was just as conscious of the cost, as well as the value, of things as our own.

Anne Middelboe Christensen's contribution, 'Dance with tears – die with a smile', comes close to capturing the excitement and sheer glory that was the Bournonville Symposium's at Takkelloftet in the Opera, Copenhagen in August 2005, even though it must have been written months before. Not every detail of choreographic expression that was shared there, or in the daily classes at 'Størekassen' before the Festival performances, can be found here, but something of the thrill of discovery and the connoisseur's excitement in finding 'truth' is, because Christensen hears what dancers say and helps them to speak to us about what they're doing, and what it means. There can be no higher praise, and I hope that readers will rush off to find her book *Hvor danser den kongelige ballet hen?* (Copenhagen, Det Schønbergske Forlag, 2002) if they have not discovered it already.

Karen Vedel addresses 'The Surviving Tradition, the Bournonville ballet heritage in the early 20th century' with a grasp of the tradition's relation to other forces in the world of ballet that raises her article well beyond the sentimental hagiography that this subject often prompts. Perhaps a little more about the (Danish) roots of Fokine's expressive aspirations (he was a pupil of a pupil of Bournonville) might have helped to shed a subtler light on the struggle between old and new, but how good it is to have this kind of argument so well supported by documentary evidence and careful research.

In conclusion, and shameless repetition of what has already been said above: this book is one of just three great publishing achievements of 2005; it is a huge success and a great contribution to scholarship, of the dance and its music in particular, and to the better understanding of Denmark's cultural achievement in general.

Colin Roth



*Carl Nielsen Brevudgaven*, ed. John Fellow, i: 1886-1897

Copenhagen: Multivers, 2005

571 pp., illus.

ISBN 87-7917-143-5

DKK 398

Når man får dette første bind af *Carl Nielsen Brevudgaven* i hånden, er det et længe savnet værk, der nu omsider bliver realiseret. Enhver, der seriøst har arbejdet med Carl Niensens liv og musik, ved, at al hidtidig Carl Nielsen-forskning har været på usikker grund. Ud over en pålidelig nodeudgave og de af samme udgiver publicerede tekster (*Carl Nielsen til sin samtid*,