

## Reports

### Research Projects

#### FOREIGN MUSIC IN COPENHAGEN AND ROSTOCK IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 17TH CENTURY

The main focus of this Ph.D. project (2007–10, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, Section of Musicology, University of Copenhagen) is to elucidate how foreign music and musicians affected local musical environments in the cities Copenhagen and Rostock. These two cities serve as examples of a capital with the seat of a reigning monarch and a commercial state centre respectively. In Copenhagen, music played a significant role at the court and the civic institutions such as the Latin school and the city churches. As for Rostock, the Latin school and the four main churches dominated the city's musical life. A part of the project throws light on the structures of these milieux in order to describe how music was used on an everyday basis. By focusing on these different social layers, the extent of the impact of foreign musical cultures across the city can be compared.

The impact of foreign music cultures on these two cities will be examined based on modern cultural theories, e.g. by using the concept of 'cultural traffic'. Different processes of the traffic in which music and musicians arrived at the two cities will be examined: 1) the mobility of musicians and their musical goods, 2) the local reception of music, and 3) the 'transformation' of local music environments as a result of that traffic. Through critical studies of known historical sources (e.g. music in print and manuscript, musical treatises and non-musical contextual sources), the extent and the purpose of these three steps will be scrutinized. The musical sources will be discussed in terms of different composing techniques and performance practices that seem to be stemming from foreign music traditions. This is done by looking at how known music from the two cities show signs of integrating techniques of e.g. *coro spezzati* and *bassus generalis*.

Bjarke Moe

### Conferences

#### RESEARCH ON CHOIRS AND CHORAL SINGING, LUND, OCTOBER 2008

On 10 October 2008, *Körcentrum Syd* in Lund, the university centre of southern Sweden and home town of a great number of choirs, had arranged a small symposium with choral singing and songs as the topic, especially focused on research on these activities. The six lectures presented a broad and thought-provoking range of subjects associated with choral activities.

Mats Paulson presented the more practical perspective. A great many types of choirs have emerged, and singers reflect themselves in their choice of choir community: 'Show me your choir, and I will tell you who you are'. It is thus interesting to see which factors direct your selection. This again influences the way coming conductors and choir organizers are taught at the conservatories, and the development of their education through the last 100 years.

'The sung identity' was the title of Anders Hammarlund's lecture, where he resumed the thread in his observations of the Jewish community singing in especially 19th century Gothenburg. The participants had a Jewish as well as a Swedish background, and so they

created their own Swedish-Scandinavian version of Jewish music. Here parallels were drawn to modern integration processes.

Also very interesting and topical was Boel Lindberg's reflections on the phenomenon of 'choirs-for-everybody' and 'we-cannot-sing-choirs', now also featured on TV. Not much research has been conducted on this subject, but it seems as though the strengthening of self-confidence is the central impulse to participation as well as staying on in the choir. Mostly women participate, and in the beginning the choirs were linked to churches or other organizations, but now they also appear free of any affiliation, and the activity is gradually discovered by companies. Lindberg inquired about more demographic studies in the field.

Dorota Lindström talked about activities with choral singing as rehabilitation for the mentally ill, elderly people, and people with chronic diseases. Convalescents experience well-being, enhanced life quality, joy, and energy, and the activity often gives them a new way in life. Amazing results have been obtained.

From the University of Lund came Folke Bohlin with a suggestion for two urgent international research projects in the field of choir research. The first one examines the political role and influence of choir singing in the Baltic states and on the Balkans – areas where choral singing has played a very active part in the last 25 years of political history. The other project focuses on the role of the text in choral music that he called 'the counterpoint of feelings'. How do different groups such as the composer, conductor, singer, and listener perceive the text? Some authors do not want their texts set to music for fear of misinterpretation.

Finally Ragnhild Sandberg-Jurström concentrated on the musical communication in the choir work. How does the conductor formulate his intentions very directly to the singers, and how do they communicate mutually? Video studies help to unveil some of these strategies.

The symposium proved very inspiring and showed that the choral movement is extensive and important and deserves an intensified international research uncovering the numerous and changing facets of singing activities.

*Anne Orbæk Jensen*

#### 'THE YEAR OF SINGING', UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN DENMARK, NOVEMBER 2008

The year 2008 has been selected as 'Sangens År' (The Year of Singing) in Denmark. The initiative was taken by the musician and choirleader Michael Bojesen and supported by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture.<sup>1</sup> There is a long and strong tradition of community singing in Denmark, but in the last decades there has been a decline in practising and promoting this area of Danish culture. The purpose of the event has been to promote and support community singing in all of its aspects in Denmark. The main focus has been on aspects of cultural integration, community singing by children and young people, and community singing among people in everyday life. Several arrangements have been made in many different places and institutions, e.g. at the University of Southern Denmark (SDU), which chose to make several community singing arrangements. These activities culminated in a research symposium on 22 November 2008, arranged by Institute of Literature, Media and Cultural Studies in cooperation with the University Library of Southern Denmark. Research in song and song culture is an old discipline at the university. A Centre for Ballad Studies was established in 1982, and University Library of Southern Denmark has some of the finest collections of hymn and song books in the country.

1 See the official website, [www.sangensaar.dk](http://www.sangensaar.dk).

The symposium contained seven papers by researchers within SDU. The overall theme of the day was to present current aspects of song and community singing research, and there seemed to be two categories, which dominated the program: aspects of hymnody and aspects of historical connections between Danish and German speaking culture. In the first category the papers focused on the hymns of Hans Christian Andersen presented by Johan de Mylius, the hymns of Bernhard Severin Ingemann by Knud Bjarne Gjesing, and the hymns of Hans Adolf Brorson from a linguistic perspective by Steffen Arndal. The second part focused on Ludvig Holstein and Carl Nielsen according to the international movement of vitalism by Mogens Davidsen, Jens Peter Jacobsens 'Gurresongs' in a Viennese reception about 1900 by Peter E. Nissen, the Prussian ban on Danish community singing in Schleswig by Inge Adriansen and last but not least German national community singing in Schleswig in the 19th century by Linda Maria Koldau (Frankfurt a.M.). The papers were of course supplemented by community singing from the audience, and the symposium ended up with a fruitful discussion about common and shared perspectives in the subjects.

The symposium showed that the academic interest and research in songs and community singing is still alive, and the day was an inspiration for the participants in order to continue research in the field and take part in similar arrangements in and outside the university in the future.

*Peter E. Nissen*

#### CARL NIELSEN: TEXTS AND CONTEXTS, MANCHESTER 2009

Nielsen research is not confined to Denmark and since the 1950s Anglo-American scholars have been working in this field. Seven years ago, a Nielsen conference in Birmingham gave evidence to the keen interest in his life and work, with strong emphasis on his participation in European musical and aesthetical currents of his time.<sup>1</sup> After some years, where the Danishness of Nielsen's music has been stressed in Danish public and political life, where his works were officially canonized in several categories of the Danish Cultural Canon, and where he more often than not is called our national composer, it was interesting to meet again with English and US scholars to discuss Nielsen. The conference was organized at the Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama, University of Manchester, 29–30 January 2009, by David Fanning, Colin Roth, and Daniel Grimley.

As a tribute to the completion of the Carl Nielsen Edition, which within 15 years has accomplished a complete critical edition of all of Nielsen's music, papers considering Nielsen's texts and contexts were presented. From the US, Anne-Marie Reynolds and Raymond Knapp both discussed the issue of nation and music. Reynolds, as a preview of her forthcoming book, discussed his folk-like songs and the 'Danish national tone' with emphasis on the harmonic structure of the songs. Knapp discussed the conditions which open music, for example Nielsen's Fourth Symphony, for nationalist readings, a concept which does not imply that the music *is* national or nationalistic, but suggests a number of features which make nationalist readings possible. Most papers were considering Nielsen's contexts, for example the affinity of his music to the Danish tradition of storytelling (Colin Roth), to the European trend of 'vitalism' (Michael Fjeldsøe), to Soviet theories on 'symphonism' (David Fanning) or to the concepts of 'energetics' in German music theory (Daniel Grimley). New evidence of Nielsen from a Czech point of view, examining the letters between Max Brod and Janáček, was delivered by Tomas Kračmar, who carried on by revealing that three notes in the Czech folk song

1 Most of the papers from this conference were published in *Carl Nielsen Studies*, 1 (2003).

used in Nielsen's orchestral piece *Danish-Bohemian Folk Tone* are transcribed by Nielsen in a way that every Czech would recognize as wrong. At the end of the conference, the Nielsen Edition was addressed from the conductors point of view by Douglas Bostock and by the head of the Nielsen Edition Niels Krabbe, who gave a statement considering the value and usefulness of the edition and on hopes for the future that are yet to be fulfilled.

*Michael Fjeldsøe*

## *Danish Musicological Society, 2008*

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The Society's annual general assembly took place on 26 March 2008 and two of the board members did not want a re-election, and we thus took leave of Morten Michelsen and Fie Skovsbøg Thaning. Instead Ph.D. fellow, Bjarke Moe and assistant professor, Ph.D., Tore Tvarnø Lind were elected and Morten Michelsen became 2nd deputy.

The *15th Nordic Musicological Congress* was held in Oslo, 5–8 August 2008 with a number of Danish participants. Morten Michelsen acted as the Danish representative on the programme committee.

At the annual one-day symposium, launched on 26 April 2008, the Society invited four musicological organizations with similar, but more restricted areas of interest: *Samfundet Dansk Kirkesang* (Society for Danish Church Song), *Dansk Selskab for Traditionel Musik og Dans* (The Danish ICTM), *Dansk Netværk for Musikpedagogisk Forskning* (Danish Network of Music Pedagogical Research) samt *Netværk for Tværvideenskabelige Studier af Musik og Betydning* (Network for Cross-Disciplinary Studies of Music and Meaning). The symposium was held under the title *Danske musikvidenskaber 2008* (Danish musicologies 2008), and it featured a presentation of the participating organizations and a number of papers from their special research fields, showing the broadness in Danish musicology and hopefully inspiring the participants to further cooperation.

In December the Society launched a new website ([www.musikforskning.dk](http://www.musikforskning.dk), also in English) with information about the Society, the symposiums and publications, where also abstracts and papers from the symposia can be read.

Also this year a revised membership directory was included in the autumn letter to the members of the Society along with preliminary information on the Society's 6th symposium scheduled to 14 March 2009 in Horsens, Jutland. It is arranged in cooperation with the festival *Holmboe in Horsens* as a celebration of Danish composer Vagn Holmboe's 100 years' anniversary.

General information on the Society can be found on p. 132 and [www.musikforskning.dk](http://www.musikforskning.dk).

*Anne Ørbæk Jensen*