

Nordisk musik-tidende

The *Nordisk musik-tidende*—subtitled *Maanedsskrift for musikere og musikvenner* (Monthly journal for musicians and friends of music)—was published by the music-dealer to the Royal Court, Carl Warmuth (1844-1895) in Kristiania (now Oslo) from January 1880 to January 1893. It was Norway's first music journal and the most extensive of its kind in Scandinavia.¹

Published in two columns in an octavo format (28.5 x 20 cm), twelve issues appeared yearly from 1880 to 1889. From 1880 to 1887, issues appeared monthly; however, during the following two years their publication was at times delayed for one to two months. These delays gradually led to a reduction in the yearly number of issues: in 1890, nine issues were published; in 1891, five; and, in 1892, a single, final issue. While the individual issues varied in length from 16 to 28 pages, 16 became the norm from 1888 to 1892. Beginning in 1883 a four-page music supplement accompanied each issue.² In 1893 only the first music supplement appeared.

The financing of the journal was based mainly on subscriptions, but individual issues with their music supplements were also sold separately. Initially, Warmuth also offered the full year's issues in a bound volume which contained a colored "elegant original cover" and gold print. During the same period the music supplements as well were collected and made available as a single publication.

In about 1840 Carl Warmuth senior (1811-1892) opened a small music shop in Christiania (later, Kristiania). The shop soon expanded, moved in 1861 to the more centrally-located Kirkegaten (Church Street), and gradually bought up rival firms. In 1874 Warmuth senior sold the business to his son, Carl Warmuth (1844-1895), who undertook its management. The largest of its kind in Norway, the firm included a music shop, a publishing house, a lending library and a concert bureau. For a short time the business also included a musical instrument factory.

Carl Warmuth received a solid musical education, played both the violin and piano, and composed. His songs (which he published) were appreciated both in Norway and abroad. He also trained for two years in Germany as a music dealer. While a very astute business man, Warmuth enjoyed a good reputation among his many customers and among the

¹Before its publication, articles dealing with music were found in journals of a more general character such as *Skilling-magazin* and *Folkebladet*.

²Warmuth used the music supplement to publicize Norwegian music. At least half of the supplements contained music by Norwegian or other Nordic composers.

artists with whom his professional activities brought him into contact. His letters show that he was personally acquainted with many well-known performers.³

Warmuth regarded supporting Norwegian music as one of his primary tasks, and encouraged both young Norwegian performers through his concert bureau, and, composers by publishing their works. In February 1880 King Oscar II awarded him the gold medal "Pro litteris et artibus" for his support of Norwegian music. In October 1881 Warmuth was also awarded the title of "Purveyor to the Royal Court," and later that of "Purveyor to the German Emperor and King."

It was at this time that Warmuth began to publish *Nordisk musik-tidende*. His correspondence⁴ reveals that during the autumn of 1879 he contacted possible contributors at home and abroad. On 7 September 1879 the following advertisement appeared in the newspaper *Morgenbladet*:

You are hereby invited to subscribe to *Nordisk Musik Tidende* (Publisher: Carl Warmuth) which, if there are a sufficient number of subscriptions, will appear on 1 Jan. 1880 with an issue of 16 pages monthly (same format as the *Skilling Magazin*). To make the journal affordable for as many as possible, I have fixed the price as low as I can, namely three crowns a year (192 pages and 12 portraits). The journal will include biographies of Norwegian, Swedish and Danish musicians and composers (with portraits of first-class workmanship), biographical sketches of foreign celebrities, reviews of new publications and concerts, news from around the world, articles of public interest etc., and will in every respect try to reflect what is going on in the musical world at home and abroad.

The subscription is binding for one year, and must be paid on delivery of the first issue of the journal. You may take out a subscription in any book- and music shop in Scandinavia or directly at the publisher Carl Warmuth, Christiania, Music Establishment.

Warmuth edited the journal, and probably he alone functioned as its publisher. He engaged competent contributors, who regularly provided material such as concert reviews, biographies, translations of articles from foreign periodicals and short news items on musical life both within and outside Scandinavia.

³The historical and biographical information herein is based on the article "Historien om Carl Warmuths Musiketablisement" (The history of Carl Warmuth's music establishment) by Kari Michelsen in "Carl Warmuth. Kongelig Hof-Musikhandler, Christiania." (Oslo: Norsk Musikforlag A/S, 1993).

⁴Carl Warmuth's personal letters are housed at the University of Oslo Library (UBO Brevs. 465B).

The journal became very popular with subscribers in all the Nordic countries, the Faroe Islands and in many European cities, and, had a circulation of 2000 copies—an impressive figure at the time. Yet in spite of the great interest and support during its first years, the enterprise eventually encountered difficulties. Subscriptions did not increase as expected, and the number of advertisers gradually diminished. During the journal's last years it was mainly Warmuth himself who advertised. The journal's decline may have resulted from the creation of national journals with much the same content in both Sweden and Denmark.⁵

Every issue of *Nordisk musik-tidende* was wrapped in a dust-jacket which, except for the front page, contained advertisements. The issues were fairly consistent in content and layout. Usually a biography of some length opened the issue, accompanied by a portrait (on page one) of the subject of the biography (for example, Halfdan Kjerulf or Franz Schubert). The article could be original or a translation from a foreign journal such as Louis Ehlert's "Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy" which appeared in the *Deutsche Rundschau*. Often the lead article was in some way related to current musical events, such as the visit of a famous artist (Emma Thursby or Josef Hoffmann). Shorter biographies and extensive obituaries (e.g., Franz Liszt) also at times opened the journal. Following these were articles of historical, aesthetic and philosophical content, such as "Musiken i Sverige i äldre tider" (Music in Sweden in olden times), and "Klassisk og romantisk" (Classic and romantic). At times an analysis of a major work was presented such as "Beethovens 9de symfoni" (Beethoven's 9th symphony). Many articles ran through several issues; simple narratives in popular style, almost short stories, like "Klaverbacillen" (The piano bacillus), were not uncommon. Towards the end of the year, usually in the November and December issues, reviews of new printed music and books on music appeared. It is important to note, however, that the greater part of each issue consisted of concert reviews and reports from correspondents at home and abroad. A permanent, popular column, was "Smaapluk" (Miscellaneous), from 1888 titled "Fra alle lande" (From all countries). This column contained brief comments about a wide range of subjects including reviews of music, reflections about music in foreign countries, anecdotes and other curiosities. The journal also regularly published lists of deceased Norwegian and foreign musicians, the addresses of Norwegian musicians living abroad, and a compilation of Norwegian music performed outside Norway. Advertisements appeared at the end of each issue. Among these was a regular column listing music teachers. Other advertisements dealt mainly with books, printed music and musical instruments. Warmuth advertised his own products and lending library, as did many foreign firms.

To insure a satisfactory standard, Warmuth contacted potential contributors; others contacted him directly. Bredo Lasson, a choir conductor, music critic and composer, contributed regularly from the beginning of 1880 until his death in 1888. Lasson wrote

⁵See respectively, *Necken*, Stockholm 1880 (specimen copy) and *Musikbladet*, København 1884.

most of the concert reviews from the capital, signing them “-s-”. For many years Warmuth also published important contributions by Jørgen Bronchhorst, chairman of the theater board in Bergen, and, by Didrik Hegerman Grønvold, a school teacher with wide-ranging cultural interests, and a member of the board of the music society Harmonien. Some of Grønvold’s music reviews for *Bergensposten* were also published in the *Nordisk musik-tidende*. Reports of Stockholm’s musical life came from Adolf Lindgren who is regarded as one of the pioneers of Swedish musicology.⁶ From the very beginning Angul Hammerich, a Danish music historian, wrote reports from Copenhagen; later, reports from this city were supplied by Leopold Rosenfeld, composer and teacher of singing, and Charles Kjerulf, composer and critic.

In 1885 contact with a new collaborator was established with the assistance of Johan Svendsen. Signing contributions under the signature “Adrean”, the new correspondent insisted on and received absolute anonymity;⁷ not even Warmuth knew his identity. Benestad and Schjelderup-Ebbe suggest that “Adrean” was probably Thorvald Haman.⁸ Warmuth also sought the collaboration of Martin Wegelius, a composer, music teacher and critic living in Helsinki. Before accepting, he requested the names of the journal’s editor and other correspondents.⁹ Wegelius submitted three contributions to the journal in 1880. There is also an interesting short article from Helsinki written in 1886 by Karl Fredrik Wasenius concerning Svendsen’s performance as a guest conductor. Alexander Bull, Ole Bull’s son, was also an important contributor to the journal. None of his articles are signed, but some can be identified with the help of his letters to Warmuth.¹⁰ Alexander Bull, who dreamed of following his father in a career as violin virtuoso, was musically gifted, but not sufficiently so to achieve his goal. He became an impresario. In Scandinavia he represented Eugène Ysaÿe, Johannes Wolf and Stanislaus Barcewicz, and accompanied the artists on their concert tours, frequently writing brief report about them for Warmuth’s journal. The performers themselves also occasionally wrote accounts of their tours, which appeared in the column “Smaapluk.” The organist Henrik Albrechtberger contributed as well both to this column and to the column “Dødsfald i den musikalske verden” (Deaths in the musical world). The list following indicates those authors we have identified:

⁶On 9 September 1879 Lindgren replied to Warmuth’s request to become a contributor to the proposed new journal, *Nordisk musik-tidende*. While Lindgren noted that Warmuth had stolen his “favorite idea,” namely, to create a new music journal, he, Lindgren, would nevertheless be at Warmuth’s disposal with his pen. In January 1881, Lindgren became the editor of *Svensk musiktidning...*, the successor of *Necken*.

⁷Letter from Johan Svendsen to Warmuth (UBO Brevs. 126).

⁸Finn Benestad og Dag Schjelderup-Ebbe. *Johan Svendsen. Mennesket og kunstneren*. (Aschehoug & Co., 1990): 189.

⁹UBO Brevs. 465B.

¹⁰Ibid.

A. H	Angul Hammerich (Copenhagen)
A. L	Adolf Lindgren (Stockholm)
Bis.	Karl Fredrik Wasenius (Helsinki)
C. T.	Clara Tschudi (Berlin)
Ch. K.	Charles Kjerulf (Copenhagen)
E. B-n.	Ernst Beckman
F.	Aimar Grønvold (Kristiania)
H.	Iver Holter (Norway, Germany)
H.	Frans Huss (Stockholm)
H. Pl.	Hother Plough (Norway)
I. H.	Iver Holter (Norway, Germany)
J. A. J.	Jacob Axel Josephson (Stockholm, Sweden)
J. Br.	Jørgen Bronchorst (Bergen)
-ls-	Julius Olsen (Norway)
M. W.	Martin Wegelius (Helsinki)
Quintus Octavus	Johan Svendsen (Paris)
R.	Ferdinand Rojahn (Norway)
-s-	Bredo Lasson (Kristiania)
-ss-	Caroline Thiess (Berlin)
-v-	Didrik Hegerman Grønvold (Bergen)

Original spellings are reproduced as they appear in the journal. However, upper case letters introducing nouns have been replaced with lower-case letters to conform to present-day standards. Editorial commentary, with the exception of titles, names of locations and individuals appears in modern Norwegian. In the Index, leadterms appear in modern spellings beneath which old and modern forms are intermingled. It is important to note that until 1907 the official written language of Norway was Danish. Thereafter Norwegian became the official written language of the country. Spelling in the two languages can be radically different, a difference that is naturally reflected in this volume between the original journal text and the editorial commentary. The user should also be aware that index terms may appear in more than one language.

This publication is based on the copy of the *Nordisk musik-tidende* in The National Music Collection, University of Oslo Library. In this copy, all music supplements are bound together separately in two volumes rather than following each single issue as originally published. Music supplements in the Calendar are presented at the end of the year to which they belong.