

# Between critic and public

## Listening to the musical work in Stockholm during the long 19<sup>th</sup> century

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'The audience, yes - who is it and where can it be found?' With these words Albert Rubenson, composer and music critic in Stockholm, draws attention to a much neglected part of 19<sup>th</sup> century music life in Sweden. Writing for the periodical *Ny tidning för musik* in the summer of 1857, Rubenson paints a rather dull picture. Except for the friends of friends of the concert arranger, the audience is limited to 'a few young idlers, one or other real friend of music ... and half a dozen critics, who believe themselves be better off as critics if they have heard the music beforehand' (Rubenson, 1857, p. 218).<sup>1</sup> One might think the writer is promoting a naïve first-time experience of music, but reading further the text rather suggests the impact on Rubenson by Eduard Hanslick's treatise *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*, which had been published just a few years earlier. However Rubenson's main issue was not primarily to educate the listener, but to elevate the status and quality of the Swedish composers, above the embarrassing level of the *dilettante*.<sup>2</sup> The chief task of the critic, therefore, was to aid the composer and mark a distinction between the amateur and the professional (see Reese Willén, 2014). Nevertheless, without the reports of the professional critic, so Rubenson seems to say, the audience is lost to ignorance and lewd enjoyment in its encounter with the music.

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1 All translations by the author. Citations from primary sources in original language are collected on pp. 24-26.

2 Rubenson was well acquainted with what was going on in the cultural centres of continental Europe. He studied in Leipzig with Niels Gade and Moritz Hauptmann and promoted the romantic symphony-aesthetic of his teachers upon his return to Stockholm. Although eager to incorporate Swedish folk-music material into his compositions, he did not abandon his formalist ideals. In an earlier article Rubenson had spelled these out: 'The artist has a definite standpoint, based on studies and on the striving along a definite path to a definite goal; the dilettante lacks such a goal. For the artist the sensuous is of subordinate importance; the spirit of the music counts for all. By the dilettante contrariwise; he enjoys all that simply sounds, shouts constantly for melody ... The artist understands and appreciates music, whereby is understood instrumental music, as such; the musical action is for him enough. ... Dilettantish is called that within the creative arts which is theoretically and technically inapt and unskilled ...' (Rubenson, 1855, p. 26f.; see also Volgsten, 2014).

A perhaps more elaborated concern with the audience can be seen in an article in *Stockholms musik-tidning*, written by Rubenson's colleague Per Conrad Boman. Boman wisely compliments the Stockholm audience for applauding Gluck's *Armide* despite a poor performance, whereas Bellini's *La straniera* had left the audience indifferent despite a strong input by the world-famous soprano Jenny Lind. Boman takes this as a sign of the audience's appreciation of the music 'itself', though he warns against what he sees as a deplorable tendency to the opposite, namely a praising of the performance, the sensuous spectacle and the performer, at the cost of the musical work (Lind's contribution was, after all, applauded, see Boman, 1843).

Boman's article was published in 1843, and though his references are to operatic rather than instrumental works, he seems to share with Rubenson an interest in the musical work 'itself', as distinct from its performance (however it should be noted that Hanslick's treatise wasn't published until 1854, which is eleven years after Boman's article). It is therefore of particular interest to see that these two writers also connect the issue of the work with that of the audience. Even so, the listener was not an entirely new topic in mid-century Sweden. Complaints on the sensationalism of the listeners were aired in a missive to the (then fifteen-year old) Royal Swedish Academy of Music already in 1786 (see Jonsson, 1993, p. 400f.). And in 1821 the journal *Läsning i musikaliska ämnen* had published a Swedish translation of Friedrich Rochlitz' article on the differences in judgement about musical artworks (*Verschiedenheit der Urtheile über Werke der Tonkunst*). Rochlitz' article, originally published in *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* in 1799, takes for granted the customary distinction between *Kenner* and *Liebhaber*, and recasts it into four new categories: the vain listener, the one who listens with understanding only, the one who listens with his ear rather than with his brain, and finally the listener who listens with his entire soul (*diejenigen, welche mit ganzer Seele hören*).<sup>3</sup>

Rochlitz' imported article notwithstanding, it takes almost half a century for the listener to become an issue in Sweden.<sup>4</sup> And when the listener eventually becomes one, it is in its collective sense, as an audience, a mass to be cultivated,<sup>5</sup> rather than as a plurality

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3 Rochlitz' distinctions are early precursors to Theodor Adorno's *Hörtypen*, among which only the 'expert listener' is capable of understanding the negative dialectics by which music's artistic 'truth' is articulated (see Adorno, 1962, pp. 12-31).

4 The distinction between *Kenner* and *Liebhaber* was established in Swedish language already by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, marking the class-distinction between the bourgeois professional and the aristocratic amateur, rather than between the academically trained and untrained. Rubenson argues that even among the professionals a distinction should be drawn between the *artist* and the *dilettante* (see Rubenson, 1857).

5 Preceded by Abraham Mankell's historical concerts in 1834 and 1835 (modelled on Fétis' *Concerts historiques* in Paris a couple of years earlier), the composer, pianist and conductor Laura Netzel started charity concerts in the 1880s, announced as 'Folk-concerts', which by 1905 had turned into 'worker's concerts', all with educational aims. Similar concerts were arranged from 1880 onwards by Anton Nyström at the Stockholm Workers' Institute, and from 1897 by Karl Valentin at the Folk-concert Association. Their shared aim was part of a

of individual listeners, *Kenner*s or *Liebhaber*s. Does this mean that the Swedish audience was less educated than its continental counterparts? Maybe even a bit backward? In one sense it was undoubtedly less educated, since the main body of knowledge that constituted the content of education, or *Bildung*, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century was of German origin and arrived in Sweden with a delay. However, accusations of being backward was more or less common gunfire from *Bildung*-promoters such as Rubenson and Boman, and served as much to mark the latter off as superior voices in the local debate (a tactic used against composers too, as we shall see).<sup>6</sup> In other words, the differences between Sweden and central Europe when it comes to the listening audience may not have been as overwhelming as they might seem at first glance. Perhaps the Swedish case may even add some light on less advanced portions of the continental audiences, which have hitherto gained proportionally little interest in the writing of Western music history.

Questions about the level of musical education among the audience – and, more specifically, whether this listening involved any awareness of a musical work ‘itself’ (and whatever that may have involved) – can be addressed in some more detail by relating to a claim by Lydia Goehr. Writing about the European situation in general, Goehr states that ‘[m]usicians began to think about music as involving the creation, performance, and reception not just of music *per se*, but of works as such’ already ‘[a]t the end of the eighteenth century’ (Goehr, 1992, p. v). As she continues, Goehr extends the claim to cover not only musicians, but also ‘persons who thought, spoke about, or produced music’ (ibid. p. 113) – even ‘audiences began to learn how to listen not just to music but to each musical work for its own sake’ (ibid. p. 237). However, Goehr warns that ‘[i]t took many years after the initial building of concert halls before audiences learned how to be quiet and how to listen, assuming that they (generally speaking) ever learned at all’ (ibid. p. 237).<sup>7</sup>

Goehr’s latter remark – whether audiences in general ever learned to be quiet and listen to musical works ‘as such’ – warrants a redirection of focus, from the educated elite listener to the average concertgoer, and by extension, from the learned centres of continental Europe, to its peripheral (and supposedly more ignorant) north. Nevertheless, to the extent that a ‘reception ... of works as such’ can be traceable among lay audi-

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nation-wide ambition to increase the *Bildung* of the people, in Ellen Key’s words, to foster ‘the development of the sense of beauty’ (Quoted in Öhrström, 1997, p. 62).

6 In Gustav Schilling’s *Encyclopädie der gesammten musikalischen Wissenschaften*, published between 1835 and 1838, Sweden is pointed out (along with Hungary, Poland, Russia, Ireland, Scotland, Denmark and Spain) as a country lacking cultivated music (Gramit, 2002, p. 56).

7 In a footnote Goehr mentions that although the *Gewandhaus* in Leipzig was exclusively devoted to orchestral performances already in 1781, half a century later, by 1844, ‘there were still only four concert halls functioning independently of operatic and dramatic establishments’ (1992, p. 236 n. 70). Where the three other halls were located is not mentioned. The *Konserthus* in Stockholm opened as late as in 1926.

ences, it is quite unlikely that such a reception comprised all facets of what Goehr calls the 'new aesthetic', that is 'doctrines of a more or less romantic, formalist and idealist inclination' (ibid. p. 153). Perhaps most obviously, it is unlikely that average audiences in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Europe listened to formal technicalities to any considerable extent, although many listeners at the beginning of the century were potentially capable of doing so, trained as amateur singers and players as they were (some noblemen and –women also had training in composition).<sup>8</sup> In his book *Listening in Paris* James Johnson tells us that 'by the late 1820s descriptions of operatic and instrumental music were pointedly excluding the extramusical' and that according to the critic François-Joseph Fétis 'people [now] spoke only of orchestral forms, modulations, strettis, and the like' (quoted in Johnson, 1995, p. 216). However, reading the passage to which Johnson refers (in the journal *Révue Musicale*) reveals that Fétis writes about authors of journals, not amateur listeners (Fétis, 1828, p. 413f.).<sup>9</sup> More telling in this case, one can assume, is Hanslick's report in the *Neue Freie Presse* of the Vienna première performance of Brahms' First symphony on December 17, 1876. The bulk of the review is programmatic, 'extramusical', leaving the few technical details to the very end (which are limited to the mentioning of 'three elements ... for which Brahms has a conspicuous predilection: syncopation, suspension, and simultaneous employment of contrasting rhythms and time-signatures', see Hanslick, 1886, p. 169).<sup>10</sup>

That said, the question I want to ask is how the lay listener made sense of the music heard. More specifically *the question is if, and if so by which terms, the Stockholm audience of the 19<sup>th</sup> century listened to musical works*. Whereas Goehr describes a view according to which individual musical works 'as such' exist more or less as Platonic entities,<sup>11</sup> this need not be the only way by which more or less autonomous musical

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8 According to Leon Botstein the practically oriented 'literacy' that characterized (parts of) the audiences of the earlier decades of the century waned as the century progressed, and was to a large extent substituted by a more 'passive' and verbally oriented 'literate' way of listening. Musical knowledge was increasingly being verbalized and as such turned into building blocks in one's personal *Bildung*. Knowledge and social status was marked by words, rather than by amateurish partaking in the performance. However, the change in listening described by Botstein concerned *Kenners*, rather than average listeners (Botstein, 1992, p. 135; see also Petersson, 2004). Concerning *Kenners*, in Sweden the nobleman Fredrik Samuel Silverstolpe not only wrote a 120-page analysis of Joseph Martin Kraus' opera *Aeneas i Carthago*, he also composed music, as did Crown prince Oscar, who also participated in the completion of the opera *Ryno* after the death of its composer Eduard Brendler in 1831. Well before that, Beethoven had offered the Crown prince training in composition, an offer declined, however (see Holmqvist, 2011, p. 727f.; on Silverstolpe's analysis, see Tegen, 1993).

9 The multifarious ways by which some intellectual listeners may have made sense of their listening experiences is summarized by Johnson in more plausible terms: 'Some understood their oceanic experiences in religious terms, echoing the humanistic language of any number of utopians, from neo-Catholic, to Saint-Simonian, to socialist' (Johnson, 1995, p. 277).

10 That Hanslick's critical agenda did not coincide with that of *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* has been shown in detail by Dana Gooley (2011).

11 Goehr describes a work concept according to which musical works are 'objectified expressions of composers that prior to compositional activity [does] not exist ... structurally integrated wholes ... symbolically

works were conceived, an assumption that leaves considerable room for interpretation to the historian (explicit ontologies and metaphysics of works are conspicuous by their absence in daily criticism). An enormous problem, then, is how to tell what people listened for in the past when, as is the case here, no questionnaires were carried out (or even dreamed of) and no reports exist. My attempt at a solution, which for matters of space can be no more than a sketch, will be to look at what was written about in daily music criticism. With a number of representative samples from four different years, I hope to draw an – although far from exhaustive – at least plausible picture of how listening may have been made sense of, and whether any change in listening took place (is it possible to detect any impact from Boman's and Rubenson's mid-century campaigns?).<sup>12</sup> I will proceed in six steps. I start by presenting a methodological approach. The following four sections examine music criticism in the Stockholm press from the years 1835, –55, –85 and 1905. In the sixth section I summarize my findings.

### The listening public and the daily press

My first step will be a narrowing-in of the concept of a listening audience. As a more or less cultivated mass of individuals I will regard this audience as a *public*. And as such I regard this public as partially constituted by what can be considered its mutual counterpart: the public criticism of the mass media. In this I follow the lead of Kristina Widestedt's analysis of music criticism in the Swedish daily press from 1780 to 1995 (as distinct from the scholarly journals more commonly investigated by musicologists and music historians).<sup>13</sup> With reference to Jürgen Habermas, Widestedt states that 'the audience, or the *public*, is constituted and held together through a criticism that mediates values that most can avow, while the public criticism would be power- and meaningless without anchoring in the audience/public' (Widestedt, 2001, p. 38). At the same time Widestedt stresses (this time with reference to Theodor Adorno) that criticism isn't just, indeed couldn't just be a simple 'incarnation of a self sufficient and indifferent "public opinion" ' (ibid.); criticism is also a cultivator of public taste.

Contrary to claims such that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century the listening audience goes through a self-disciplining process, aimed mainly at the control of extrovert bodily behaviour (ibid. p. 12ff, Widestedt refers to Johnson, 1995), Widestedt's main thesis is that

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represented by composers in scores ... Once created ... existing after their creators have died, and whether or not they are performed or listened to at any given time', existing 'over and above [their] performances and score[s]' (Goehr, 1992, pp. 2, 106). For a critical view, see Volgsten (2012a).

12 The daily papers are, in 1835, *Aftonbladet* and *Dagligt Allehanda*; in 1855, *Aftonbladet* and *Svenska tidningen*; in 1885 and 1905, *Aftonbladet*, *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, *Dagens Nyheter* and *Svenska Dagbladet*.

13 As Dana Gooley (2011, p. 300) puts it, 'The specialized music periodicals tended to operate at a level too high for the 'average' reader'.

'music criticism, through description and evaluation, can formulate a hidden regulatory framework for concert-goers and news-readers, ... in other words, exert power over the audience' (ibid. p. 15).

There are two important differences between Widestedt's approach and mine. Whereas Widestedt's main (Foucauldian) issue is the dichotomous relation between rationality and emotions, the first controlling the latter through the construction of music as an object of knowledge (ibid. pp.16, 93f.), my concern is rather *what kind (or different kinds) of knowledge-object* it is that the daily music criticism in Stockholm promotes at different points of time during the 19th century. Is music understood primarily as an activity or is it regarded as an enduring object (i.e. work) of which the performance is but a means of communication? Moreover, accepting the Habermasian argument as my premise – as much as Widestedt's cautious remark that 'the signs of disciplining can only be interpreted intentionally, that is as a (bi-)intention of the criticism', and not as a confirmation that 'any disciplining of the audience actually did come about' (ibid. p. 36, cf. Goehr's similar remark above). I will regard the knowledge-object articulated in music criticism (that conceptual formation by which the listener makes sense of the musical sounds) as of a kind that can be taken to correspond sufficiently to what the public audience may have *heard*.<sup>14</sup> Another way of putting the central question thereby becomes: what is it that the music criticism of the Stockholm daily press tells the city's audience to listen to?

To enable comparisons with her findings (and thereby 'thicken' my own descriptions), I will use much of the same sources as does Widestedt, though my choice of samples and quotes differ. This amounts to an examination of the daily press criticism in Stockholm during the years 1835, 1885 and 1905. Whereas Widestedt also surveys 1780, 1955 and 1995, I restrict the period of samples to what can be considered as parts of the 'long' 19<sup>th</sup> century (cf. Dahlhaus, 1989, p. 1f.). On the other hand I add the year 1855, a year when Rubenson was busy campaigning for new ideals in the scholarly press. I also double the number of dailies examined in the years 1885 and 1905, from Widestedt's two to four (although only three are explicitly quoted for the last year).

As an illustrative historical foil, some words should also be said about the debate in *Stockholms Posten* during Eastertime 1780 (not commented on by Widestedt, but cf. Leux-Henschen, 1958), between the director of the Royal Opera Count Barnekow and court composer Joseph Martin Kraus. Barnekow initiates the debate when accusing Kraus' colleague and friend Francesco Uttini of a 'Crimen musicalis' in the latter's adaptation of a performance of Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* to available vocal and instrumental means. Like painters 'Ticiani, Raphael, Corregge, Carrache, van Dyck', Barnekow says, Per-

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14 On the role of verbal language in the shaping of aural categories, see Volgsten (2012b).

golesi is a '*genie createur*', and 'to improve Pergolesi is an impossibility: to respectfully imitate him a great difficulty: the latter praiseworthy, the former inexcusable' (Anon., 1780a).

Kraus intrepidly responds to the nobleman, that '[h]ad it always been a rather inexcusable wrong to modify others' compositions, then surely Geminiani had not dared change those by Corelli composed Solos for Violin and Bass to Concerts for 7 parts ... . These Concerts, which under the name of Corelli-Geminiani Concerti Grossi are rather well known, have withal in all times been considered as Masterpieces, without Corelli's musical reputation thereby having been to any degree aggrieved, or that favour him denied, to be regarded equal with Geminiani and Pergolesi, as Auctor Classicus in Music' (Anon., 1780b).

The debate, which continues for several weeks, comes to read like a duel between the mighty Aristocrat and the clever Freeman, a verbal duel eventually ending to the latter's advantage (a month later the paper tells about Barnekow having received 'gracious dismissal' from his duty as director of the Royal Opera) (Anon., 1780c). Of relevance for the present context is that the debate displays a typically 18<sup>th</sup>-century view of composer and work. In contrast to the modern ethics of *Werktreue* that Goehr brings to the fore (Goehr, 1992, 243ff.), Barnekow's unease concerns a piece of perfection, rather than a work of originality, a written composition corresponding impeccably to the rules of genre, rather than an abstract work expressing the unique character of its composer. And the composer is (at his best) an *auctor classicus*, a pre-romantic *genie createur* (a concept not yet severed from mimetic exactions), rather than a true romantic genius.<sup>15</sup> Neither Kraus nor Uttini is of any contradictory view in this regard. Neither is Barnekow's unease to any considerable extent tied up with the musical experience of the audience, as is none of the published articles in *Stockholms Posten* this year.

## 1835 – the work as aesthetic activity

In 1780, there was no sign of interest in the listener in the Stockholm press.<sup>16</sup> Criticism and listening public were not yet separately defined. At this incunabular moment, music criticism was rather a mixture of voices and opinions tending towards a common point of view, or consensus (public concert life still being in its infancy). Half a century later the contours of the new media genre appear more clearly. By 1835 critic and audience have

15 Rather than being influenced by Young or Kant, Barnekow's French jargon is indebted to Diderot – and as Wladyslaw Tatarkiewicz says with reference to Diderot's view on creativity: 'the Enlightenment accepted no mysteries' (Tatarkiewicz, 1980, p. 249; see also Schmidt, 1985; Volgsten 2013, pp. 19ff., 37ff.).

16 It should be noted that the journals investigated by for instance Mary Sue Morrow, run by publishing firms as they often were, commented on published scores, rather than on public performances, as did the daily press investigated here (see Morrow, 1997; see also Gooley, 2011).

evolved into two distinct and clearly defined actors on the Stockholm arena of criticism, and in addition a third party is articulated: the musician (singer, player, composer). From a historian's perspective the remainder of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, until 1905, can be seen as a power struggle in and by which the critic and the audience are the major antagonists, each seeking support in the musicians' third party, each dominating the other to some extent at different points in time (Widestedt, 2001, p. 49ff.).<sup>17</sup>

Criticism, as exemplified in Widestedt's study, is thus a means by which a listening mass of persons constitutes itself as a public audience (a means of self-constitution articulated differently at different points in time). Given this circumstance it is no big surprise that a significant topic of the daily criticism in the Stockholm papers is music as a common cultural phenomenon, a source of *Bildung* and shaping of the listener's moral character. Widestedt relates this to journalism's obvious interest in the public event, in contrast to music as object of aesthetic discourse. Nevertheless, music as aesthetic object is important too during the entire century. So much so that *music as aesthetic object* and *music as social event* make up for two contrasting principal themes of musical criticism in Widestedt's analysis, themes by which the actors of the critical discourse relate. To this Widestedt adds another two distinct themes, the *individual* (the critic's) and the *collective* (the audience's) *experiences* of the music. Of the latter two, collective experience turns out to be the major theme of the century as a whole, outdoing even those of music as social event and music as aesthetic object (ibid. pp. 45ff., 91).

However, if we look at the particular years observed things turn out differently. Of interest for our present concern is that Widestedt points out music as aesthetic object as the major theme in 1835. It is said to dominate the reports in sharp competition with that of the public experience, leaving the two remaining themes (social event and individual experience) far behind. Now, Widestedt makes it clear that her statistics does not differentiate between criticism of performances and of compositions. This means that 'music as aesthetic object' is a category too blunt for answering if, and if so by which terms, the Stockholm audience listened to musical works. Besides opera being a main subject (dominating with vocal solo recitals over instrumental solo and orchestral concerts), reading the dailies *Aftonbladet* and *Dagligt Allehanda* reveals that even the distinction between performance of the work and the work as composition is not wholly accurate. Although musical compositions are often (but not always) mentioned by name,

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17 This is a figurative power struggle played out in the press over a long period of time (and as such only observable from the historian's meta-perspective), by which each figurative actor serves the long-term interests of the corresponding 'real' party they represent. As such the power struggle was hardly apparent to the individual persons that made up the audiences and groups of critics at specific periods of time, which means it does not affect the plausibility of the method (i.e. taking daily criticism as a sign of what the audiences heard).

this does not mean they are spoken about as reified objects, 'as such' or 'in themselves'. So how, then, is music conceived of as aesthetic object by the Stockholm dailies in 1835?

As aesthetic object, music is mostly described in either of two ways: either as the compositional activity of the composer, or (which happens more frequently) as the execution by the performers. In other words, the work of music is regarded primarily as an *activity* carried out by the composer and (subsequently) by the performer. In this it is more similar to the standard view held by Kraus in 1780, than to the new approach propagated by Rubenson in the 1850s. The 'work' is still very much something you do. In other words it is not a question of describing either the work or the performance; the work is rather made sense of in relation to how it was composed and/or to the way it is performed. As such technical or formal descriptions of the music, to the extent that they occur, are usually interspersed as brief references in reviews of the performer's execution and/or the composer's compositional activity.

An example of the work being an activity carried out by the performer is a review of a performance at the Royal Opera of Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz* - the work objectifyingly spoken of as 'an old friend and favourite' - wherein the focus is on a new cast of opera singers' respective contributions. For instance, in the role as Agatha, the reader is told, Mrs Engbom's 'strong and sonorous voice was heard to much delight, and to the extent that not all parts were given perfectly, however the eminently beautiful aria by the balcony could, in particular, not fail to win much acclaim' (Anon., 1835a).

Another example similarly focusing on the work-as-performance is the review of a program by foreign clarinet virtuoso Wagner (not presented by forename), containing Weber's clarinet concerto, preceded by the overture to *Iphigenie*, and followed by compositions by Wagner's own hand. According to the critic,

the overture was not, especially the first part thereof, executed with the power and verve, for which our orchestra otherwise so often has given excellent evidence. ... The number that was performed with most style and effect seemed to us to be Mr W:s own composition: a potpourri on several themes from famous operas. However, his performance seemed to us not to any higher extent distinguished by spirit or virtuosity in general, and in the country that is familiar with [Bernhard] Crusell [the foreign virtuoso] does not attune the listener so much to his advantage. (Anon., 1835b)

As we see, the musical works are spoken of in terms of the way they were executed, by the orchestra and by the soloist. Indeed, this way of speaking about music is so common and familiar, even today, that it may seem odd to point it out as such.

In contrast to hearing music in terms of its performance, the 1835 criticism also displays how music can be heard in terms the composer's compositional activity. In a review of a performance of the Danish composer Friedrich Kuhlau's comic opera *The Triplet Brothers From Damascus*, it is said about the composer that

one has found it before, [Kuhlau] does not disregard the timpanist; this time outranking Auber himself in clatter and pounding. (Anon., 1835c)

A more positive account of Kuhlau's work is given in the rival paper, telling the reader that

[t]he masterly overture to the *Elverhøj* opened the concert; it gains each time it is reheard. A stormy instrumentation has seldom been put to such flawless use with so much reason. *Kuhlau* had a great deal of similarity with *Weber*, without being his imitator, and the overtures to *Elverhøj* and *Lulu* can, according to our conviction, fully measure up with those of *Der Freischütz* and *Oberon*. Should they in some compositional detail be their second, they would in others, e.g. completeness and execution, outrank at least the latter. (Anon., 1835d)

In the latter quote, mentioning the works by name and the use of the pronoun 'it' has an objectifying effect, though the main way of describing the music is as a compositional craft or activity. As an example of the much less common way of describing the musical work in objectifying technical terms is the review of a staging of Gluck's *Armide*, which informs the reader that

this masterwork, ... although not so rich in varied melodies as certain newer composers', must nevertheless charm the true connoisseur by its gorgeous harmonies, the truthfulness of its paintings, and the colossal in the actual tone masses. No effort seems to be saved, on the part of the Directorate, in order that the whole should give an impressive effect. (anon., 1835e)

But still, after mentioning some general aspects of the composition, the focus is redirected towards the execution of the music, 'the whole', albeit this time curiously explained in terms of its administrative ('Directorate') conditions.

Whereas many of the articles on music in 1835 are but short notices, sometimes mentioning no more than the name of the performer and sometimes also of the work performed, the review of Adolf Fredrik Lindblad's opera *Fronörerna* on May 19 is an impressive exception in its sheer size. The daily paper *Aftonbladet* devotes almost an entire page to the première performance at the Royal Opera (a major event about which the competing newspaper *Dagligt Allehanda* remains curiously silent).<sup>18</sup> Of this space about two thirds are spent on summarizing the plot. The remainder is divided into a review of the performance and a summary judgement about the composer. The latter, wherein one can discern a few comments about the music, begins with lofty statements about some unspecified advantages of the genius composers Mozart and Beethoven, and only after this name-dropping detour does the critic announce his judgement upon Lindblad and his opera:

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18 In its supplement *Aftontidningen*, *Dagligt Allehanda* allocated extensive space for music reviews, however it was never devoted to a singular event, like *Aftonbladet's* review of *Fronörerna*.

... the bizarre is not entirely tantamount to the ingenious, and a beauty, which must be calculated by numbers, is irrefutably none. ... [T]he whole [is] therefore constituted such that one must hear it three, four times to get a grip on it. We have not hereby wanted to deny that the author possesses genius, all this affectation [sic.] notwithstanding, and enough so to be able, with all his conceptions of fine art, to write something truly beautiful. May he count the art for less artificial and [so too] his next work, since we hope this is just a beginning... (Anon., 1835f)

In these comments on Lindblad as a composer the tone is similar to those on Kuhlau and Weber. What we read are the verdicts of superior judges in trials of taste and compositional craftsmanship, verdicts that in hindsight read more like eager self-legitimations than informative criticisms (an observation in accord with Widestedt's analysis and with a significance that I will say more about in the following).

All in all, the kinds of event mainly covered by the Stockholm daily papers in 1835 are opera performances and vocal solo recitals. Instrumental orchestra performances are relatively rare. This should be seen in relation to Widestedt's remark that only ten percent of the music performed in London, Paris and Vienna during the first part of the century was devoted to the classical style (Widestedt, 2001, p. 111).<sup>19</sup> The comment that 'Beethoven's *Sinfonia Eroica*, clever as all the works by this master, and which was given in two sections, with other numbers in between, was rather coldly received', should therefore not be a surprise, nor the comment by the same critic that the *Eroica* 'is not as splendid, as many other of Beethoven's masterworks' (Anon., 1835g).

To the extent that music was written about – and by extension also heard – as an aesthetic object in Stockholm in 1835, it was hardly at all in terms of works existing autonomously 'as such' or 'in themselves'.<sup>20</sup> Rather than in reifying formal or technical terms, music is conceived of as an aesthetic object in general and superficial terms concerning the compositional activity of the composer, and even more commonly in terms of how well the music was executed by the performers. Moreover, when details are referred

19 Widestedt refers to William Weber's observation that 'the German classical style led by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert [i]n its early form during the late eighteenth century ... had commanded considerable popularity, but with the wartime lapse in concert life it lost most of its public and was slow to regain popularity. By 1830 it was still little known in Paris, had a weak base in Vienna, and enjoyed a small though prestigious public in London. During the next two decades it began its rise to become the central component of the concert repertoire, but did not accomplish that well after mid-century' (Weber, 1975, p. 19).

20 This goes also for those occurrences when the critic speaks about the execution of the music as a 'representation', for instance the performances of the latest opera in Paris, *Le Cheval de bronze* by Auber (Anon., 1835h). That the use of the term 'representation' does not carry any philosophical weight – that the performance is not a materialization, a 'making present', of an idealistic work existing immaterially 'in itself' – should be clear by the fact that the term occurs already in 1780 in a reference to a performance of Gluck's *Armide* and Piccini's *Roland* (Anon., 1780d). At this early time in history the concept was not yet invented. Moreover, in 1835, the phrase 'representation' is used about a performance by an 'Alp singer' yodelling and playing a hammered dulcimer (Anon., 1835i) – hardly a paradigm example of a work 'as such' along Goehr's criteria.

to as observable characteristics of the composer's activity (that is, the way the music is composed), the primary function seems to be an elevation of the status of the critic in relation to the public, by showing off the critic as the composer's equal in terms of technical skill, and even as superior in matters of taste. That this simultaneously implies a targeting of the listener's attention to these same details seems to be an unintended side effect, rather than a conscious intention. Is there any difference in these matters if we look forward, to the years 1855 and -85, and into the 20<sup>th</sup>-century, to 1905?

## 1855 – the work as exclusive masterpiece vs. the simplicity of song

Perhaps the most striking difference in comparison with those of 1835 is that the musical reviews of 1855's daily press are markedly longer. 1855 (a year not covered by Widestedt) is a year witnessing Rubenson and colleagues battling out their ideas in the journal *Ny tidning för musik* (cf. n. 2), and as such motivates special attention. The expert journal is frequently referred to and advertised in the major daily *Aftonbladet*. On occasion an entire review can be reprinted (as in *Aftonbladet* on august 8).<sup>21</sup> On the other hand the journal is hardly mentioned at all in the rival *Svenska tidningen*.

Of the years surveyed, 1855 is remarkable for the striking difference in attitudes towards music between the two papers, a difference that the coverage of the professional journal indicates. The focus on the work as performance is still there in both dailies, whereas in *Aftonbladet* the work as compositional activity gives way, however sparingly, to descriptions indicating a view of musical works as abstract objects existing independently of their composers and performances. For instance, in the extensive review of the première performance of Hermann Berens' opera *Violetta*, after recounting the plot at length, and after the usual disapproval of certain aspects of Berens' composing, certain other aspects receive positive comment – but then in terms of the work 'itself', whereby the composer is only indirectly credited (Anon., 1855a).

A similar case is the review of the première of Lindblad's Second symphony. The same Lindblad that composed the opera *Fronörererna* in 1835 had already made his debut as a symphonist a few years earlier, with a composition that gained critical acclaim by Schumann upon its performance in Leipzig under Mendelsohn (Hedwall, 1983, 105f.). Lindblad's Second symphony, requested by court conductor Jacopo Foroni, nevertheless

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21 In a couple of announcements the journal promises 'critical analyses of new musical works, especially products from the national press' (Anon., 1855g). However, one should be aware that the expression 'musical work' (*musikverk*) at this time still denotes printed collections of music (cf. von Loesch, 1998 for 17<sup>th</sup>-century German sources of this terminology). The main music critic in *Aftonbladet* in 1855 was Wilhelm Bauck, who was also the chief editor of *Ny tidning för musik*, which might explain the frequent advertisements (Bauck was also the author of the reprinted article).

received lukewarm response. In a first anonymous review the symphony – appearing on a program along with Beethoven's Ninth symphony, interspersed by a vocal section with excerpts from Spohr's *Faust*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* and Mozart's *Titus* – is mentioned very briefly, commenting on some wanting details, although concluding that 'the total effect has unity, as the composition is seamless' (Anon., 1855b). In a second review a week later (by the signature '-s.'), the composition gets a lengthier assessment in positive terms, whereby the symphony's movements are accounted for separately as existing more or less autonomously (i.e. without reference to the compositional activity of the composer, nor the performance), although in extramusical rather than formalist terms (Anon., 1855c). The article, like the previous, ends with a lengthy tribute to Beethoven and his Ninth symphony.

Notable for this year's reviews is that unreserved appraisal is exclusively saved for deceased masters. Not only is 'father Bach ... one of the most original geniuses that ever visited our world' (Anon., 1855d), and Mozart's *Jupiter* symphony a 'splendour painting, in richness, wholeness, and consummate beauty commensurable only to itself' (Anon., 1855e), these masters are canonized and frequently held up as contrastive quality markers against contemporary and local wannabes (cf. Pettersson, 2004). The evaluative jargon used in these cases is not the technical vocabulary used to pick out flaws in anyone's compositional technique, but a blend of programmatic allusions and aesthetic terminology – including catchwords such as *unity*, *organism*, *originality*.

The consecration of Austro-German classical masters is repeated in *Svenska Tidningen*, albeit in different aesthetic terms. In an unsigned article at the beginning of the year (with the title 'Letter from Paris'), complaints are levelled against what is taken to be a 'stagnation' and 'regression' in the 'world of the tone poem'. The ideal music has given way to an 'ignoble material art' of which the 'surface charms' lacks corresponding 'inward power'. The contemporary 'talents and *petit-genies*' lack the gift of the true 'classics', which is the power to unite 'the limbs' of the artwork into a 'living body' wherein the 'separate beautiful parts sanctify each other' (Anon., 1855f).

The key to this programmatic declaration is the word 'tone poem', which should be understood not as referring to Liszt's novelties and its likes (cf. the reference to the 'classics'), but rather to the plain and simple expression of the national soul, or *Volksgeist*, through song. Together with the mentioning of Shakespeare, the article rather indicates a debt to Johann Gottfried Herder. This is also what one gathers in the ensuing reviews, all published under the heading 'Letters on art' and signed A. M. (the initials of composer and critic Abraham Mankell). A case in point is the verdict that

[t]he most beautiful numbers in *Violetta* are indisputably those, wherein Mr Berens succeeds in elevating his musical setting to the simplicity of song, yes sometime he even manages to reach up closely to the melody of the folk. (Mankell, 1855a)

Lindblad's symphony is likewise laudable because its singable themes marks a 'return to music's lost peace' (Mankell, 1855b). In a review of a musical soir e, the best piece on the program is the simple folk melody *Du gamla du friska* (which was later turned into the Swedish national anthem), of which it is said that 'the Scandinavian north owns its original melody [*urmelodi*]' (Mankell, 1855c). And as yardstick for 'the true song' is held up no one less than Jenny Lind (Mankell, 1855d).

The expression of the national soul, or *Volksgesit*, through song is mandatory also when the composition is an instrumental work such as Beethoven's Seventh symphony (Mankell 1855e), and does not unreservedly welcome the formal complexities of a Bach fugue, where 'reason outweighs the heart' (Mankell, 1855f). Given the Herderian ethos of Mankell's criticism - which was widespread in Sweden during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (and which in Mankell's case also had a pronounced Moravian tinge, see Volgsten, 2013; cf. also Gramit, 2002, pp. 41ff.) - any objectifying tendencies of the vocabulary must be weighted against the inclusive and all-encompassing practice of collective singing. Musical beauty is not judged at a contemplative distance to a musical object, but experienced as sympathetic devotion (*andakt*) and attunement with one's fellow men. Thus

... these simple, picturesque melodies, which delight the deepest interiors of man, this music, which anyone understands, these telling motives, on whose rich grounds the great tone poets built their temples. (Mankell, 1855g)

1855 is thus a year remarkable for both the generous space allotted to music criticism, and to the diversity of aesthetic stances articulated in the daily press. Since Widestedt does not survey this year, any journalistic explanations for this diversity must be left aside. What it means for the notion of a listening public I will get back to in the concluding section. However, the state of criticism would not remain unchanged.

## 1885 - the work lost in the social event

In 1885 the role of the daily press critic is reduced to a reporter of public spectacle wherein performer and audience constitute the main focus of interest. Musical works are seldom mentioned and the judgement of the critic is of marginal importance. Music as aesthetic object has given way to music as social event and collective experience (in a rare report of an instrumental performance the reader is told about Beethoven's *Kreuzer sonata*, that it is so well known it needs no further mention, see Anon., 1885a). Widestedt explains the change as a result of the press now having become a mass medium, aiming for a wider audience than the actual concertgoers (Widestedt, 2001, pp.

66, 115f.). Striking are the recurring reports of star singer Kristina Nilsson's many performances abroad and at home. What she sings is of lesser importance. Instead it is the massive acclaim of her audiences that are reported to the reader. In addition there is an abundance of items mentioning international music events, in Paris, London, Berlin and elsewhere.

Given that symphonic concerts are becoming more common than in earlier years, it is noteworthy that they are so scarcely reported. An Easter Sunday concert for full house, with Franz Berwald's overture to *Estrella de Soria* and Beethoven's Ninth symphony on the program, gets but a small notice (Anon., 1885b). One particular event stands out this year, covered in extensive articles by all the major newspapers in the capital city. This is the memorial concert for the recently deceased composer and court conductor Ludvig Norman. The concert is devoted entirely to Norman's oeuvre, with a première performance of his Third symphony in D-minor as the obvious highlight (at least from a retrospective point of view). Characteristic of the criticism in this year, however, is the review in *Dagens Nyheter*, which says nothing about the work 'as such', and only mentions the conductor's contribution to the performance (Anon., 1885c). *Aftonbladet's* critic claims, with a similar disinterest, that he does not like 'post-classicist' symphonies, although admitting the symphony is 'doubtless' Norman's best piece (Anon., 1885d). More genuinely positive seem the reviews in *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* and *Svenska Dagbladet*. The former acknowledges the composer's 'warm inspiration and powerful creativity' (words scarcely used by Swedish critics for their fellow countrymen composers), while the latter assigns to the music 'a modest and pure simplicity' (Anon., 1885e,f). In particular the G-minor *allegretto* seems to have attracted the critic, as well as the audience: 'an enchanting piece, swinging in a light rhythmic dance, a true Nordic composition, with something transparent, slightly bewitching [*trollskt*] in motive and mood' (Anon., 1885f).

References to individual musical works, such as in the reviews of the Norman memorial concert (most notably in that of *Svenska Dagbladet*), are exceptional in 1885. The main focus of criticism - and this goes for all four dailies this year, whereby accounts of individual critics' aesthetic stances (as in 1855) become superfluous - is on the everyday circumstances of star performers and on the audiences' experiences of the events.<sup>22</sup>

## 1905 - the work as tone-painting and extra-musical experience

When we enter into the 20<sup>th</sup> century things have changed radically. Widestedt speaks about 'the revenge of the independent critic' (Widestedt, 2001, p. 77). The critic, no

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22 Which is all the more remarkable since by 1885 Stockholm had already gotten its first full-time professional music critic, Adolf Lindgren, who was also a respected music historian and theorist (see Volgsten, 2012a, p. 161ff.).

longer anonymous, has become an unquestionable expert who judges high from low, not only when it comes to specific works and performances (as in 1835), or in confirming the superiority of the classics (as in 1855), but also in establishing what kinds of music be considered art and what are to be dismissed as lowly and popular. The space devoted to music criticism has also increased considerably. Lengthy critical reviews are now the norm. A national self-confidence can also be noted. Works by Swedish composers are reviewed, and whereas brief items in 1835 considered foreign affairs, in 1885 this had changed to a focus on the fame of Swedish artists. By contrast the international attention in 1905 is given to Swedish composers. An example is the report of Helena Munk-tell's concert at the *Salle Pleyel* in Paris, according to which her *Sonat för violin och piano* 'was received with thunderous applause' (Anon., 1905a).

Curious as it may seem (though with a possible reason, which I will get to), the comments on the compositional activity of the composer and on the performance of the musician now rarely involve formal or technical details, as they occasionally did in 1835. A review of a performance of Berwald's *Piano trio* in D-minor, pairing the two thematic subcategories (composition and performance) side by side, is a good example. The composition - dedicated to Swedish engineer John Ericsson (inventor of steam engines, propellers and the first submarine) - 'wherein the ingenious composer so successfully characterizes the powerful and conceptive in this Swedish giant', benefitted from the performance of the piano part 'executed pre-eminently and sensitively by Mr Wilh[elm] Stenhammar, while the violin- and violincello-parts were equally handled by Mssrs Aulin and Claeson' (Anon., 1905b).

When the composers' compositional activities are tied to technical detail, it is almost exclusively in negative critiques of their work. For instance when the *Organ-symphony* by Otto Olsson is said to be

... one of the most pretentious and patience-testing works of music this writer has been exposed to in a very long time. For a full fifty minutes the composer treats his - victims, I guess one must say, with the cheapest improvisational material without idea, without shape, without mood, interspersed only with the commonest sounds and a brutally tasteless alternation between a crashing *fff* and a fluting *ppp*. The form can in itself not be called symphonic, since this requires real thematic groundmotives [sic] and thematic groupings; the composer's way of writing is so confused and unplastic that not even in a movement called 'fugue' could this writer find those traits that are distinctive for this form: subject, answer, development and interludes, not to mention such features as strettì and thematic variations. (Peterson-Berger, 1905a)

As in 1835, the reference to technical detail seems largely to serve the critic's own needs, rather than those of the composer or the audience. But this does not mean the public was not capable of hearing what the critic commented upon. More interesting than references to composition and performance as activities is therefore the way new

compositions by contemporary composers are positively reviewed, a way of describing noticeable already in 1855 but absent in 1885. In positive reviews the reference to the composer's activity is more or less gone (for reasons I will shortly suggest), leaving the public with a description that eventually seems to grapple with the work 'as such' and 'in itself'. A case in point is the review of Hugo Alfvén's Second symphony in D major and the symphonic poem *En skärgårdssägen* (A legend of the skerries) by the same composer, the latter in première performance.

... an artwork by rank is this symphony, in the content of its thoughts, the solidness of its form and broad lines, the intensifying moods, from the moderato movement's idyllic delight and through the andante's rising gravity and the bitter ridicule of the scherzo, up to the dramatic finale, which wrestles with the impending death itself and audaciously fugues its choral motive.

The evening's new symphonic poem 'En skärgårdssägen', which likewise received a fine execution, indicates by its name a sufficiently indefinite program to enable the tone images by themselves to act in a purely musical direction. It is an imaginative tone-piece with fine and saturated colours, where both haze over wide horizons and approaching storms are sensed, a rather forceful pathos developing out of a melancholy-drenched idyll, with preserved motivic unity in the seemingly free movement of the whole. (Anon., 1905c)

In sum, what we can see at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is a way of writing about music whereby the activities of the composers and performers are increasingly being separated from the work, the music 'itself'. Two things should be noted, though. First, in negative reviews, the composition is still tied to its composer in performative terms. Music is the outcome of a (substandard) compositional activity. Talk about the musical work in composer-free terms, as it were, seems rather to be a way for the critic in a small city like Stockholm to talk positively about novel works by contemporary 'colleagues' without having to indulge in personal flattery (which would inexorably reduce the critic to the composer's second on the musical arena). To the extent that this seems to be a social fact of the matter (an hypothesis in need of further support, no doubt), the second point to be noted concerns the music 'as such' and 'in itself'.

Although the review above of Alfvén's Second symphony and of his symphonic poem does not involve the composer and is not set in terms of a compositional activity, it is far from a formalist account of the work. To the contrary, it is a fairly programmatic description (not unlike what we have seen in Hanslick's review of Brahms three decades earlier). In this it is representative for much of the daily music criticism in the Stockholm papers in 1905. This does not mean that everyone would have agreed with Alfvén's rival colleague, the composer, critic, and music philosopher Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, who in a review the same year claimed that 'all good music, yes, all music we seek instinctively to

enjoy as program music' (Peterson-Berger, 1905b).<sup>23</sup> But it would be equally if not more wrong to say the opposite, that the main view was anything like a Hanslickian (formalist) constraint of music to tonally moving forms. Given the assumptions about the reciprocal relationship between criticism and listening, we may therefore assume that the Stockholm audience, when listening to Alfvén's *En skärgårdssågen*, heard something – a sounding object rather than an activity – largely corresponding to Peterson-Berger's description: a 'tone-painting of waves lapping and sun glittering over wide waters', a work containing 'a lot of noteworthy and brilliantly crafted details' (Peterson-Berger, 1905c).<sup>24</sup> And as with Alfvén's piece, so similarly with other works of music.

## Concluding remarks

Before summing up this exposé of listening and criticism in Stockholm during the long 19<sup>th</sup> century, let me return to the question raised earlier, whether the diversity of aesthetic standpoints articulated in the daily press during 1855 has any consequences for the notion of a listening public. Wouldn't a diversity of stances in the press imply a corresponding diversity of listening publics?

In a discussion of how 'music created a public' in London between the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, literary historian Harold Love stresses 'the [simultaneous] existence of a considerable number of discrete publics and the fact that these publics were usually also members of other publics' (Love, 2004). In many ways the Swedish case resembles the British as described by Love (given the usual delay of some decades, cf. above).<sup>25</sup> My concern is not so much the historical background uncovered by Love as the possible existence of a number of intersecting musical publics in Stockholm during the period investigated.<sup>26</sup> I have already mentioned the existence of *Kenner*s and *Liebhav*ers and the possible subsets of these categories along Rochlitz' lines. But whereas these early 19<sup>th</sup>-century categories pertain mainly to those actively engaging in playing and singing, the daily press addresses – indeed must be able to address – also the non-playing and non-singing lay listener (especially when the press increasingly turns towards a mass audience at the end of the century).<sup>27</sup> This means that the public audience discussed

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23 Peterson-Berger developed an aesthetics of 'self-communication' (*personlighetsmeddelelse*) according to which the moral and spiritual qualities of a person may be mediated through music's melodic (non-formal) qualities, through the associations and cultural connotations the sounds evoke in the listener (see Volgsten 2009; 2013).

24 However, there may be a sarcastic tinge of irony in Peterson-Berger's description not shared by the wider audience (cf. Volgsten 2009; 2013).

25 In Sweden public concerts were initiated in 1731 by the composer and court conductor Johan Helmich Roman at the House of Nobility in Stockholm, upon Roman's return from London and a stay in George Frideric Handel's orchestra (see Bengtsson, 1982, p. xii).

26 Cf. n. 5 for an indication that this may indeed be the case (see also Tegen, 1955).

27 A further source informing the musical experiences of the average concertgoer is the printed program note,

here – which I have variously described as lay listener and average concertgoer – might not have been as homogenous as my methodological treatment may indicate. Still none of the aesthetic stances that can be identified in the press accords with any formalist Platonic work concept (some brand of Aristotelianism would be a safer bet across the board, cf. Volgsten, 2012a).

What we can assume is that the public audience in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Stockholm generally listened for nice melodies, well performed by beautiful voices, vocal and instrumental. To the extent that the audience wanted formal organization of complex works, it was hardly an aesthetic end in itself, but a means for highlighting beautiful melodies. And whereas the Stockholm audience in 1835 most likely conceived of the music heard as an activity executed by a performer or a composer (or both), by 1905 music was heard much more as an aesthetic object 'as such' – corresponding to a change in criticism, for which I have suggested a social reason (i.e. an objectifying rhetoric functioning as a means to commend musical compositions without making use of personal flattery) in addition to changes in theory and aesthetics.

But we must not understand this as a radical shift from one extreme point of view (hearing music exclusively as an activity) to its diametrical opposite (hearing music exclusively as object). It is rather a shift of emphasis, whereby an objectifying vocabulary is used less in 1835 and more in 1905. When music was written about independently from its performance or its composer, towards the end of the century, it was mainly in programmatic and 'extramusical' terms, not in the formalist terms that would help the audience to individuate works that exist independently of ever being 'performed or listened to at any given time' (Goehr, op cit. p. 2, see also n. 11). Of course, this does not rule out the possibility that an abstract work concept along Goehr's lines prevailed among listeners already in 1835, but it gives no indication that, if so, it was of any importance for what was heard, either at that time or in 1905 (and as such it is questionable). Remaining to be answered is why, in 1885, music as aesthetic object gives way to music as social event and collective experience, especially since in 1855 music seems to have been up for considerable debate and multiple aesthetic perspectives: was it just a matter of the daily press becoming mass media (as Widestedt implies), or are there factors of a musico-aesthetic kind to be found?

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appearing from 1893 at the Vienna Philharmonic's concerts (see Botstein, 1992, p. 140f.). The precursor of the *Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra*, the *Stockholms konsertförening*, added biographical notes to its printed programs sporadically from the inception in 1902, and work comments regularly in their printed programs from 1916 (as such the program note is beyond the scope of the present article). The first occurrence of a program note seems to have been that accompanying the première performance of Berlioz' *Symphonie fantastique* in Paris 1830 (see Goehr, 1992, p. 240).

And what about Rubenson and Boman? Were they no more than adventitious ripples on the crest of the historical tide, leaving no traces at all in the life of music? Reading the fifty-two weekly issues of *Ny tidning för musik* from 1855 shows that Rubenson was a radical writer in his promotion of romantic aesthetic ideals (Boman less so).<sup>28</sup> Wilhelm Bauck, who was the chief editor of the journal as well as main critic in *Aftonbladet* can be said to have held a middle ground between Rubenson and his allies (among which one can count composers J. A. Josephson, Norman and to some extent Berwald) on the one hand, and Mankell of *Svenska tidningen* on the other (see Volgsten, 2013). Bauck shared a formalist bent with the former, but like Mankell he despised the new music of the Leipzig romantics ('the symphonic genre in Germany is but an experimental field', Anon., 1855b). Nevertheless, when Rubenson, in 1859, writes that

[i]nstrumental music is comprehended by different listeners in two distinct ways. Some appreciate mostly or exclusively music's only true content, the beautiful tonal forms: others more the feelings that music is considered to produce. ... But music can only be grasped and judged as music. It does not have its original model in nature, and the musical art work's material, content, form and purpose is nothing else than tones, tone forms, tonal beauty (Rubenson, 1859)

he is not only imposing an exaggerated disparity between listeners; he is articulating radical thoughts, bordering on the extreme, in line with Hanslick's famous tract

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28 Theoretically advanced articles only appeared occasionally in the journals. In 1835 the only scholarly journal is the monthly *Tidning för teater och musik*. As the title 'Journal for theatre and music' indicates, it is not exclusively dedicated to music, having opera as its main focus. However the technical level of the articles is quite the same as in the daily press. If there is a difference it is in the amount of space allotted to each review, which for obvious reasons is larger in the monthly periodical than in the daily paper. But the published material does not require any more advanced knowledge on the part of the reader. Thus *Tidning för teater och musik* of 1835 does not promote, presuppose or indicate any different kind of listening than that of the dailies. *Svensk musiktidning*, the major music journal in 1885 (the other journals being *Det musikaliska Sverige* and *Musikbladet*, both explicitly addressing a lay audience, the latter likewise focusing on music 'for home use'), hardly affords any more space to music reviews than does the daily press of the same year. Reviews of concerts and performances, almost exclusively vocal, are published as brief items. However, the journal differs from its 1835 precursor by containing several articles of a more scholarly kind. For instance, in its second issue Beethoven's Ninth symphony is taken up to discussion. Described in programmatic terms, with the only technical formulation being a statement that 'the recitative by the instrumental basses ... almost transcends the bounds for the absolute music', the article nevertheless underpins a work-focussed listening. In a more advanced article in its fifth issue, Richard Wagner's draft for a revision of the same symphony (Beethoven's ninth) is referred with notational illustrations. The most demanding reading of the year is a series of articles on 'The science of music', wherein names like Otakar Hostinsky and Hugo Riemann are mentioned (issue 15). However, the memorial concert for Norman, with its première performance of Norman's Third symphony, is mentioned as briefly as in the daily press (issue 19). Whereas the music criticism in the daily press gets more advanced and extensive in 1905, the same cannot be said about *Svensk musiktidning*, which is the major music periodical also this year. The lengthy articles are mostly biographies, whereas concert reviews are as brief as ever. The one exception is not a review, but a long article on music aesthetics titled *Om musiken som uttrycksmedel. Ett litet bidrag till tonkonstens estetik* (On music as expressive means. A small contribution to the aesthetics of music), in which the ideas of G. W. F. Hegel, Theodor Vischer and the Swedish aesthetician Samuel Grubbe are discussed (issues 17-19). For a less specific discussion of the mid-century journals, see Heintz (2003); for a comprehensive view covering the whole century, see Davidsson (1986).

from 1854. In his home country Rubenson was ahead of his time, but he did not cause any dramatic paradigm shift (to the extent it occurred, the change came slowly and gradually),<sup>29</sup> just as Hanslick's theoretical pamphlet did not affect his daily criticism in any revolutionary way (cf. Grimes, 2013, p. 1ff.).<sup>30</sup> For the majority of the Stockholm audience listening remained a more or less 'extramusical' experience, and so it remained in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when an abstract formalist work-concept was promoted by new legal and commercial standards (see Volgsten, 2012a; 2013). Whether, and to what extent, Stockholm differed to any considerable extent from other cities on the European continent remains very much an unanswered question. Should it turn out to be an anomaly in this case, this would call for further explanation.

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 Anon., 1885d. [untitled review] *Aftonbladet*, November 16.  
 Anon., 1885e. [untitled review] *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, November 16.  
 Anon., 1885f. [untitled review] *Svenska Dagbladet*, November 16.

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29 Late in his life, Rubenson reviewed music in *Svenska Dagbladet* (see Andersson, 1960, p. 210f.).

30 To the extent that one can speak of a paradigm change in *musical aesthetics*, as does Morrow, this does not automatically imply a revolutionary change of *listening* among the audiences. Quite the contrary: hearing music from within the older paradigm of rhetoric likely continued side-by-side with newer ways long into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, even when the music in question was a wordless symphony (cf. Morrow, 1997, p. 12ff.). One can thus question statements such as Mark Evan Bonds' that E. T. A. Hoffmann 'created a paradigm' for the perception of music, one which came about as a 'revolution in listening' (see Bonds, 2006, pp. 9, 28).

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## Abstract

It is widely assumed that the perception of the musical work changed radically around the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Not only aestheticians and music theorists, but allegedly also listeners too, started to listen to music as if the sounds heard were the aural signs of autonomous musical works. Works became heard as structurally unified wholes represented by composers in scores – the works, once created, were assumed to exist like Platonic entities after their creators had died, irrespectively of whether they were performed or listened to at any given time. This picture of 19<sup>th</sup> century listening can be questioned on many grounds. Here it is done by studying the music criticism of the

daily press in Stockholm during the years 1835, -55, -85, and 1905. Although Stockholm can be considered peripheral on both geographical and cultural grounds, as such it may nevertheless give a reasonable idea of what the lay listener of the average European audience may have heard. To this end, it is argued, examination of the daily criticism may be a more plausible source of information than the scholarly journals more commonly examined by musicologists and music historians. Should the Stockholm case turn out to be an anomaly among the cities of Europe (a question not answered here), this in itself would call for an explanation. Here the no less challenging question is limited to asking if, and if so by which terms, the Stockholm audience of the 19<sup>th</sup> century listened to musical works?

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## Citations in original language

p. 1

Publiken ja --- hvem är den och var finns den?

Dessa inskränka sig till några unga dagdrifvare, en och annan verklig musikvän ... samt ett halft dussin recenser, hvilka tro sig recensera musiken bättre om de hört på den. (Rubenson, 1857, p. 218)

footnote 2

Konstnären har en bestämd ståndpunkt, grundad på studier och på sträfvet på en bestämd väg till ett bestämt mål; dilettanten saknar en sådan. För konstnären har det sinnliga elementet en underordnad betydelse; andan i musikstycket är det viktigaste. Hos dilettanten tvärtom; han njuter af allt som endast klingar, ropar beständigt på melodi ... . Konstnären förstår och njuter af musik, hvarmed här närmast förstås instrumental musik, som sådan; den musikaliska handlingen är för honom nog. ... Dilettantisk kallas inom den skapande konsten det teoretiskt och tekniskt oskickliga ... . (Rubenson, 1855, p. 26f.)

p. 6f.

At förbättra Pergolese, är en omöjlighet: at värdigt imitera honom en stor swårighet: det senare berömvärdt, det förra oförläteligt. (Anon., 1780a)

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Om det alltid varit et så ganska oförlåtligt fel, at ändra andras compositioner, hade säkerligen icke Geminiani vågat ändra de af Corelli satta Solos för Violin och Bass, till Concerter för 7 partier, ehuru han nästan öfver alt måst sätta til hela långa meningarne. Dessa Concerter, som under namn af Corelli-Geminiani Concerti Grossi äro ganska kände, hafva därjämte i alla tider ansedts som Mästerstycken, utan att Corellis Musikaliska reputation därmedelst i det ringaste blifvidt lederad, eller den förmån honom fränkänd, at lika med Geminiani och Pergolese anses som Auctor Classicus i Musiquen. (Anon., 1780b)

nådigt afsked (Anon., 1780c)

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hennes starka och klangfulla röst hördes med mycket nöje, och om icke alla partierna gåfvos fullkomligt, så kunde dock i synnerhet den utmärkt vackra arian vid balkongen icke undgå att vinna mycket bifall. (Anon., 1835a)

Ouvertyren utfördes icke, serdeles första delen deraf, med den kraft och verve, hvarpå vår Orchester eljest ofta gifvit så utmärkta bevis. ... Det med mesta stil och effect utförda numret syntes oss Herr W:s egen composition: ett potpourri på åtskilliga themer ur kända operor. Hans föredrag syntes oss dock icke i högre grad utmärkt hvarken af själ eller virtuositet i allmänhet, och i det land som är vandt vid Crusell [kan W] icke stämman åhöraren så mycket till hans fördel. (Anon., 1835b)

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man har funnit det förut, [Kuhlau] försmår icke pukslagaren; denna gång öfverträffade han I slammer och dunkande sjefaste Auber. (Anon., 1835c)

Den herrliga ouvertyren till Elverhöjen öppnade konserten; den vinner för hvarje gång man återhör den. En stormig instrumentering har sällan med så mycket förstånd och så verklig tadelritt blifvit använd. Kuhlau hade mycken likhet med Weber, utan att vara hans imitatör, och ouvertyrerna till Elverhöjen och Lulu kunna, efter vår öfvertygelse, fullt mäta sig med Friskyttens och Oberons. Skulle de i vissa compositionsdetaljer stå efter dem, torde de I andra, t. ex. helgjutenhet och genomföring, öfverträffa åtminstone den senare. (Anon., 1835d)

detta mästerverk, som, om än icke så rikt på växlande melodier som vissa nyare kompositörers, likväl måste förtjusa den sanna konstvännen genom dess herrliga harmonier, sanningen af dess målningar, och det kolossala I sjelfva tonmassorna. Ingen omsorg tycktes vara sparad å Direktionens sida, för att det hela skulle gifva en imponerande effekt. (Anon., 1835e)

p. 11

... det bisarra är alldeles icke liktydigt med det genialiska, och en skönhet, som skall räknas ut med siffror, är ovedersägligen ingen". "det hela [är] därför så beskaffadt, att man måste höra det tre, fyra gånger för att få någon reda på det. Att författaren oakadt all denna affektation, eger geni, och tillräckligt för att med andra begrepp om skön konst, kunna skriva något verklig skönt, hafva vi icke härmed velat förneka. Må han anse konsten för mindre konstig och hans nästa arbete, ty vi hoppas att detta endast är en början... (Anon. 1835f)

Beethovens Sinfonia Eroica, snillrik som alla arbeten af denna mästare, och hvilken gafs i tvänne afdelningar med andra numror emellan, emottogs tämligen kallt. Den är också icke så utmärkt, som flere andra af Beethovens mästerverk. (Anon., 1835g)

p. 13

totaleffekten har enhet, emedan compositionen är helgjuten (Anon., 1855b)

fader Bach ... ett bland de mest originella snillen som någonsin gästade vår jord (Anon., 1855d)

prakttafla, i rikedom, helgjutenhet, och fulländad skönhet endast jemförlig med sig sjelf (Anon., 1855 e)

p. 14

De skönaste numren i 'Violetta' äro ovedersägligen de, i hvilka hr Berens lyckas höja sin tonsättning till visans enkelhet: ja, någon gång uphinner han mycket nära folkets ton. (Mankell, 1855a)

...dessa enkla, bildsköna melodier, hvilka fröjda människans djupaste inre, denna musik, hvilken alla förstå, dessa mycket sägande motiv, på hvilkas rika grundval de store tondiktarne bygde sina tempel... (Mankell, 1855g)

p. 15

varm inspiration och mäktig skaparekraft (Anon., 1885e)

en flärdfri och ren enkelhet (Anon., 1885f)

en förtjusande bit, gungande i en lätt rytmisk dans, en äkta nordisk komposition, med någonting genomskinligt, litet trolsk i motivet och stämningen. (ibid.)

p. 16

mottogs med stormande bifall. (Anon., 1905a)

hvari den genialiske tonsättaren så lyckligt karaktäriserar det kraftiga och tankedigra hos denne svenske storman. (Anon., 1905b)

Pianostämman utfördes öfverlägset och känsligt af hr Wilh. Stenhammar, under det att violin- och violincellstämorna jämbördigt sköttes af hrr Aulin och Claeson (ibid.)

... ett af de mest pretentiösa och tålmodspröfvande musikverk undertecknad på länge blifvit utsatt för. I fulla femtio minuter undfagnar kompositören sin – offer måste man väl säga, med det billigaste improvisationsgods utan idé, utan gestalt, utan stämning, endast med de allmännaste valklanger emellanåt och en brutalt smaklös växling mellan brakande fff och flöjtande ppp. Formen kan i och för sig ej kallas symfonisk, då detta förutsätter verkliga tematiska grundmotiv och tematisk gruppering; kompositörens skrifsätt är så virrigt och oplastiskt att icke ens i en sats som kallade sig 'fuga' kunde anmäla återfinna de för denna form utmärkande kännetecknen: subjekt, svar, genomföringar och mellanspel, för att nu ej tala om sådana finesser som trångföringar och förändringar af temat. (Peterson-Berger, 1905a)

p. 17

ett konstverk af rang är denna symfoni, genom tankarnas halt, formernas gedigenhet och breda linier, stämningarnas stegring från moderato-satsens idylliska välbehag och igenom andantets allvarslyftning samt scherzots bittra löje fram till den dramatiska finalen, som brottas med sjelfva den hotande döden och dristigt

fungerar dennas koralmotiv. Aftonens nya symfoniska dikt 'En skärgårdssägen', som äfvenledes fick ett fint utförande, anger genom sitt namn ett tillräckligt obestämt program för att låta tonbilderna själfva verka i rent musikalisk riktning. Det är ett fantasirikt tonstycke med fina och mättade färger, där både soldis kring vida horisonter och stormars anlopp förnimmas, ett ganska kraftigt patos utvecklar sig ur vemodsblandad idyll, med bibehållande af motivisk enhet i det helas skenbart fria gång. (Anon., 1905c)

p. 20

Instrumentalmusik uppfattas af olika åhörare på tvenne olika sätt. Några fästa sig företrädesvis eller uteslutande vid musikens enda *verkliga innehåll*, de sköna tonformerna; andra mer vid de känslor som musiken anses framställa. ... Men musik kan blott fattas och bedömas *som musik*. Den eger icke någon förebild i naturen, och det musikaliska konstverkets material, innehåll, form och ändamål är blott toner, tonformer, tonskönhet. (Rubenson, 1859)