

## R E P O R T S

### The Carl Nielsen Edition

The scholarly critical Edition of Nielsen's Complete Works, based at The Royal Library in Copenhagen, began in 1994, thanks to an annual grant from the Ministry of Culture, supplemented by money from private foundations for the production costs of individual volumes.

The immediate occasion for the establishment of the Edition was an invitation from the then Minister of Culture, Jytte Hilden, following recognition of the poor state of the performance materials in connection with a performance of *Maskarade* in Innsbruck.

The Edition embraces all Nielsen's completed works and individual movements, published on a music-philological basis, and is designed both for practical music-making and for research purposes.

The Edition is now at the halfway stage and comprises the following works:

- The six symphonies
- The operas *Maskarade* and *Saul and David* (orchestral and vocal scores with Danish/English and Danish/German librettos)
- The incidental music to Oehlenschläger's play *Aladdin*

- The three concertos
- The choral works *Hymnus Amoris*, *Sleep* and *Springtime on Funen*
- Four small orchestral works: *Andante Tranquillo* and *Scherzo*, *Symphonic Rhapsody*, *Suite for Strings*, and *Helios*.

Several of these are printed for the first time, notably the two operas (full scores), the *Andante Tranquillo*, the *Symphonic Rhapsody* and the complete *Aladdin*.

The revised editions have been extensively used in recent years, both for concert performance and CD recording, notably the symphonies by the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra under Michael Schönwandt (Dacapo Records), the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra under Douglas Bostock (Classico), and the Scottish National Orchestra under Osmo Vänskä (BIS), and the complete *Maskarade* conducted by Ulf Schirmer (Decca).

In June 2003 *Maskarade* was performed in English by the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, conducted by Clive Timms, using the new edition. This was apparently the first ever London performance of the work.

In 2003/04 the following volumes are planned for publication:

- II/11, Chamber Music 2, works with woodwind and works with piano
- II/10, Chamber Music 1, works for strings
- II/8, Orchestral works, including *Saga-Dream, Pan and Syrinx, At the Bier of a Young Artist* etc.
- Piano scores of the three concertos

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*Niels Krabbe*

### **Carl Nielsen's Letters**

It is well known that Nielsen wrote many letters (in total more than 3000), which are almost all extremely interesting. They cover biographical, musical, aesthetic, societal, and existential matters. The large majority are preserved in The Royal Library in Copenhagen, but there are also letters to and from Nielsen in many private and other public collections both in Denmark and abroad. Access to a small part of the material was

forbidden until 2001, and a single folder with family letters remains not for consultation until 2026.

Up to now no one has had a full overview of this comprehensive correspondence. From 2002 onwards a process of systematic collation has been under way, with a view to a complete annotated edition in more than 10 volumes, headed by John Fellow and planned for publication between 2004 and 2010. The edition will cover all letters from Nielsen and a selection to him.

The decisive breakthrough for the funding of the project came with the Gewandhaus artistic director Herbert Blomstedt's offer to donate his fee for three Nielsen concerts at the end of 2002 to the edition. On this basis, a number of private foundations have contributed further funds.

The project is based at The Royal Library, with a steering group consisting of library board consultant Anette Faaborg, head of the Research Department John T. Lauridsen, barrister Niels Gangsted-Rasmussen and the compiler and editor of the edition, John Fellow.

*Niels Krabbe*

### **Carl Nielsen at the piano**

Among the more than 6000 phonograph cylinders in the National Sound Archive at the Aarhus State Library a number turned up a few years ago with the inscription 'Carl Nielsen'. These are three

Edison cylinders, each approx. three minutes in duration. Following a complicated technical laser-treatment of the brittle cylinders at the Institute for Information Recording in Kyiv (Ukraine) a rather unclear sound-signal was successfully digitally transferred, making possible a closer analysis of the contents of the cylinders.

It seems that there was an animated gathering at the home of Nielsen's admirers, Vera and Carl Johan Michaelsen. At some point – perhaps after dinner – some of those present were asked to record something on the three cylinders (there may originally have been more). Accordingly there is some conversation on each of the cylinders (some of which cannot be made out) and music played by Emil Telmányi and supposedly Carl Nielsen.

The contents are:

Cylinder 1:

Words from Emil Telmányi  
Telmányi plays the Prelude from Bach's solo Sonata in G minor, BWV 1001

Cylinder 2:

Words (Carl Nielsen?)  
Words (Carl Nielsen's daughter, Søs)  
Telmányi plays the Prelude from Bach's solo Partita No. 3 in E major, BWV 1006

Cylinder 3:

Words (Carl Nielsen?)  
Carl Nielsen (?) plays the Puppet March from the *Humoresque-Bagatelles*, opus 11  
Carl Nielsen (?) plays *Som en rejselysten Flaade* from the play *The Mother*. The song

is played through twice, the second time with an improvised alternative ending, presumably to use up the cylinder's full playing time.

Although no one dares to claim with complete certainty, there is unanimity among Danish Nielsen scholars that it is indeed Carl Nielsen playing. Whether it is his voice is less sure. During the autumn of 2003 the State Library will publish a booklet about the three cylinders, including a CD with the words and the music of the cylinders.

Niels Krabbe

## Man and musician

### A new book on Carl Nielsen

The purpose of this Nielsen-biography is in the first place to describe Carl Nielsen's personality and career from a more thorough examination of the available material including as much as possible of the very extensive correspondence and documentary records held in both Danish and foreign institutions.

The project began in 1997 in connection with my work as chief editor and co-author of a CD-ROM about Carl Nielsen's music. It was painfully clear that there were great holes in our knowledge of Nielsen, and the objective became to fill at least a number of these holes.

The Royal Library has been the host institution for this work, which has proceeded on a part-time basis, and

which is estimated for completion with the publication of a biography by the publisher Gyldendal in Autumn 2005. The backbone of the work among other things is the establishment, as far as possible, of a complete survey of Carl Nielsen's activities and performances of his music during his lifetime.

At the current time, a specially-designed database has registered more than 4,500 performances, and many more will turn up. Comprehensive research has also been undertaken into Nielsen's family background and his childhood and youth, such as he himself described in 'My Childhood on Funen',

an account that earlier biographers have tended to take at face value without any kind of critical examination.

Other material that has already been examined includes Nielsen's relationship with great Danish institutions such as Tivoli, the Royal Theatre, and the Danish State Radio. At present, the author is working on Nielsen's sometimes strained relationship with his principal publisher, Wilhelm Hansen. Some of the newly-found research results are published in various articles in Danish journals and a single English periodical.

*Knud Ketting*