

La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa

La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa began weekly publication in Barcelona on 3 February 1861 and, for reasons unknown, ceased publication on 3 December 1865. The journal appeared every Sunday, except during the summer months,¹ and produced 179 four-page issues² printed in a two-column format. The journal's subtitle — "Weekly Artistic Journal, Directed by a Group of Professors"— reflected its intention, namely, to recognize the work of musicians and music teachers. Beginning in issue no. 46 the journal's subtitle was simplified to "Weekly Artistic Journal," a better reflection of its content. Strongly influenced by French musical culture, *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa's* ultimate goal was to resist the domination of Italian music by supporting Spanish music, and particularly that of Cataluña.

Following the example of many nineteenth-century music periodicals, the journal was sponsored and financed by a music publisher, in this case Miguel Budó the journal's publisher and owner, and his brother Juan Budó a music publisher and owner of a music store.³

The principal force in the journal's publication was its Director, Mariano Soriano Fuertes (1817-1880), an experienced writer, music historian, pedagogue and composer. Among Soriano Fuertes's credits was the directorship of the *Iberia Musical* (Madrid, 1842), a journal of great significance in the history of the Spanish musical press.⁴ Soriano Fuertes also enjoyed an established reputation as composer of church and stage music (in the main zarzuelas) and carried out various musical activities as professor of solfeggio at the Madrid Conservatory (1843), director of the Liceo Musical in Córdoba and Seville (1844), and director of opera theaters in Seville (Teatro de San Fernando), Cádiz and Barcelona (Teatro del Liceo). Soriano Fuertes is recognized today as the author of the first complete history of Spanish music.⁵ Though his contributions tended to excel in patriotism, Soriano Fuertes's articles are written from an historical and musicological perspective that rises above the level of contemporary Spanish music criticism and makes

¹The summer recesses lasted from one month (August 1861) to four or five months (June-September in 1862, 1863 and 1864, and from June-October in 1865).

²Although the numbering of issues continues until 178, the journal produced 179 issues, as two different issues were numbered no. 175. Exceptionally, issue no. 153 contains six pages.

³Juan Budó y Martín was born in Barcelona in 1822 where he distinguished himself as a clarinetist in the orchestra of the city of Condes. See Jacinto Torres Mulas, ed., *Diccionario biográfico-bibliográfico de efemérides de músicos españoles*, by Baltasar Saldoni, vol. II, (Madrid, 1986), 16.

⁴This journal is important not, as is often stated, because it was the first Spanish music journal, but rather because it represents "the first long-term attempt to deal with musical topics in some depth" and with an investigative and critical character. See Torres Mulas, "Music Periodicals in Spain. Beginnings and Historical Development," *Fontes Artis Musicae* (October-December 1997): 336-67.

⁵The book, entitled *Historia de la música española desde la venida de los fenicios hasta el año 1850*, was published in four volumes the first of which was serialized from 1855 to 1859. Soriano Fuertes was also the author of *Música árabe-española y conexión de la música con la astronomía, medicina y arquitectura* (Barcelona, 1853).

La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa one of the most interesting journals in Spain in the second half of the nineteenth century.

If compared to other contemporary music journals, *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa* does not present significant new aspects in its layout. Typically, issues consist primarily of reviews and news, preceded by one, or at times two, major articles. Two columns appear systematically throughout the journal's publication: first, "Variedades" —treating musical or related theatrical events in Spain and abroad—followed by "Barcelona" dealing exclusively with news from this city. Beginning in May 1861, the journal began regular publication of the column "Teatros de la Corte" which offered news and reviews from Madrid. Notes to subscribers about music supplements and advertisements invariably open and close each issue.

Articles in the journal treat a rich variety of subjects ranging from the usual topics of opera and zarzuela, to those more specialized such as music theory, bibliography, piano manufacturing, aesthetics, performance practice and music education. Biographies of musicians and artists are also included.

The journal's many articles, reviews and notices published on musical life in Barcelona and Madrid reflect continuing problems—closely related to the country's ongoing political and economic situation—that prevented the development of music in nineteenth century Spain. Finding the "practice of religious music ruined..., the music theater perverted..., military music brought into disrepute..., [and] salon music reduced to mere Andalusian settings, or to the reproduction of foreign works to the detriment of our own composers...,⁶ Soriano Fuertes frequently focused on these subjects when discussing contemporary musical life.

Information on musical life in Barcelona, which occupies by far the largest part of the journal, deals primarily with music education, the activities of choral societies (*orfeones*) and news related to the city's principal theater, the Liceo. Concerning music education, *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa* calls regularly for the Spanish Government to raise the salaries of music teachers and to reform music education programs in the conservatories. In addition, the journal also calls for the creation of a single educational institution, to replace many active at that time, such as the Conservatorio de Música de Barcelona, Instituto Musical, Orfeón and Sociedad Coral Clavé. The journal argues that the unification of Barcelona's centers of music education will earn the city "the glory of being the unique, truly philharmonic capital in Spain."⁷

⁶Mariano Soriano Fuertes, "Arte músico español. A nuestros suscriptores," *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa* [GMB] 4, no. 141 (2 October 1864): 1.

⁷La Redacción, "Introducción," GMB 4, no. 1 (3 February 1861): 1.

The journal's publication run coincides with the apogee of the movement of choral societies in Spain. Two rival leaders of choral societies were active in Barcelona, Juan Tolosa and Anselmo Clavé; each claimed to be creator of the *orfeones* and each defended his different educational principles.⁸ Mariano Soriano Fuertes was a loyal supporter of Clavé and thus *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa* gives both up-to-date information on the concerts and reunions of Clavé's choral society Euterpe,⁹ and advertises the publication of the society's official journal, *El Metrónomo* (1863-1864). However, *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa* does not participate in discussions between Clavé and Tolosa, as their disagreements were closely followed in their respective publications, *El Metrónomo* and *El Orfeón Español* (1862).

In its nearly five years of publication *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa* offers a detailed chronicle of musical life at the Teatro del Liceo. In addition to reviews of performances, the journal reports on the destruction of the theater by fire in 1861 and its rapid reconstruction, as well as the theater's management problems in 1862 and 1863. In this respect, the journal supported Amadeo Verger in the intense polemic that preceded the hiring of a new impresario. Thereafter the journal celebrated his election: "Not in vain did we persist in [demanding that] D. Amadeo deserved to take his place as the Liceo's impresario... . Since the arrival of Mr. Verger in Barcelona, we have noticed, not only variety but also a higher level in the quality of the performances as well as in the artists."¹⁰ Singers performing at the Liceo occupy a prominent place in the journal, and its opinion about them seems to have influenced the course of musical life at the theater. A telling example is the journal's harsh criticism of Rosina Penco for a poor performance. This led her to compensate the public—despite the conditions of her contract—by performing "two nights in a row" and by singing "the role of Alice in *Roberto*, an opera not included in her repertory. . . ."¹¹

News from Madrid is also treated. The inauguration of the Sociedad de Cuartetos (Quartet Society) by Jesús de Monasterio in 1863 receives particular attention. In addition, the journal actively participates in polemical discussions of music issues in the capital. Notable, for example, are the articles dealing with a controversial new system of music notation proposed by theorist José Gil y Navarro and opposed by a group of professors at the Madrid Conservatory (Hilarión Eslava, Emilio Arrieta, Rafael Hernando and Francisco Frontera de Valldemosa). When the professors prevented Queen Isabel II from financing the implementation of José Gil y Navarro's new system, *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa* not only reported on the method's deficiencies (as related by the

⁸See Torres Mulas, "Orfeones y sociedades corales," *Cuadernos de música* 1, no. 2, p. 78-91.

⁹In 1845 Anselmo Clavé founded an instrumental ensemble named *La Aurora*. This later became a choral society, *La Fraternidad*, which was the predecessor of *Euterpe* founded on 2 February 1850. Finally, in 1860 Clavé created the Asociación de Coros Euterpenses. At the time of publication of *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa* there were about eighty-five choral societies in Spain.

¹⁰GMB 3, no. 86 (18 January 1863): 4.

¹¹GMB 4, no. 140 (29 May 1864): 1-3.

faculty members), but also published Gil y Navarro's defense of his system and sold his method by subscription through Budó's music store.¹²

If in its early issues the journal advocates the zarzuela, it later criticizes the genre, protesting against the poor quality of the librettos. For example, on the occasion of the première of Barbieri's *El secreto de una dama* in Barcelona's Teatro Principal, the journal's review refers to the zarzuela's libretto by Luis de Rivera as "a poor rhapsody, an argument without either legs or head, an intricacy with neither a beginning nor an end, characters that go and come, exit and appear without justification."¹³ In addition, the journal denounces the spectacle's commercial character blaming it on the vulgar taste of the public. It also protests against the lack of a Catalan repertory, favoring, in particular, the zarzuelas by Rovira.

To support its continuous criticism to the Spanish Government in managing musical affairs, *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa* took the French Government as a model: "the reasons for the current glory of France are found in the true protection [of music] by an informed Government . . . today French music dominates in theaters as Italian [music] did thirty years ago. . . in taste, in the performance art and accuracy, few can compare to French singers and instrumentalists."¹⁴

Interest in French music is noticeable in the journal. For example, two extensive articles deal with the first performance of Gounod's *Faust* at the Teatro del Liceo in 1864, and, French composers—such as Hector Berlioz, and Fromental Hálevy—are frequently treated. Although *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa* opposes the prominence of Italian opera, Verdi occupies an important place in its pages. While the journal frequently criticizes his compositional style for its "unpleasant blending of genres and ideas, continuously destroying the richness and simplicity of the melody in the Italian genre [opera],"¹⁵ it defends the composer's place in the contemporary musical scene when Verdi's *Inno delle nazioni* was dismissed from the celebrations at the 1862 International Exhibition in London.

Changes in performance practice are reflected in the journal by an increasing demand on singers to respect the composer's work and style of composition. For example, whereas a performance of the baritone Boccolini is praised because he "expresses [himself] with facility, placing the accent without mannerism . . . and adjusts with exactitude to what is written,"¹⁶ the soprano Eleonora Grossi is criticized for confusing "Verdi with Rossini, doing *apuntaturas* (ornaments) and cadences unsuited to the genre."¹⁷

¹²See GMB nos. 166, 167, 168, and 169 (1865).

¹³GMB 3, no. 84 (4 January 1863): 3.

¹⁴GMB 1, no. 28 (9 September 1861): 1-2.

¹⁵GMB 3, no. 107 (11 October 1863): 2.

¹⁶GMB 5, no. 177 (26 November 1865): 2.

¹⁷GMB 3, no. 109 (25 October 1863): 2.

Among the articles (some published in series) that deserve particular attention are those treating Beethoven's correspondence, Verdi's visit to Spain, and music in Germany, Italy, Russia, Greece, Egypt, Algeria, China and India. While the longest series in the journal treats the influence of music on animals and humans, more important are those dealing with music education for the blind, the history of comic opera and fifteenth-century Spanish composers and other artists.¹⁸ Beginning in issue no. 14 the journal publishes literary articles, poems, novels, and short stories that appear thereafter only sporadically. Articles on arts, other than music, are rare. Occasionally there are also reviews of publications such as Saldoni's *Diccionario biográfico-bibliográfico de efemérides de músicos españoles*.

The journal also publishes interesting appendices, either inserted between articles or in place of the advertisement section. These contain a list, for example, of singers at the Théâtre-Italian in Paris from 1645 to 1856, new French operas performed in 1861, Italian singers hired in Italy and at foreign theaters from 1861 to 1862, new operas performed in Italy in 1862, and Italian opera companies active in theaters in Europe and the New World.

La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa draws a large amount of information from other national and foreign journals, for the most part in French. Among the national periodicals are: *Crónica Meridional* (Almería), *El Comercio* (Alicante), *La Corona Artística del Gran Teatro del Liceo*, *Diario de Avisos*, *Diario de Barcelona*, *Eco de Euterpe*, *El Metrónomo*, *El Orfeón Español*, *El Pueblo*, *El Telégrafo*, *La Revista Musical* (Barcelona), *Boletín Comercial* (Cádiz), *El Porvenir* (Granada), *El Arpa* (Havana), *Diario de La Coruña*, *El Constitucional* (Madrid), *El Correo de Teatros*, *Diario de Madrid*, *La Gaceta Musical de Madrid*, *La Paz* (Murcia), *Las Novedades*, *El Porvenir* (Seville), *Diario Mercantil*, *El Rubi* (Valencia), and *El Eco de Castilla* (Valladolid).

Among the foreign are the French-language journals *Le Moniteur*, *Le Monde musicale*, *Le Guide musical*, *L'Art musical*, *La France*, *L'Harp d'Eole*, *La Musique cosmique*, *Le Monde artiste*, *Le Pays*, *Revue de Paris*, *Revue et Gazette des théâtres*, *Le Moniteur espagnol* *La Presse théâtrale et musicale*; the Italian-language journals *La Patria*, *L'Amico degli artisti*, *Il Monte viso di Saluzzo*, *Il Monitore dei teatri*, *Il Pirata*, *Il Pugnolo*, *Il Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore*, *La Rondinella*, *Gazzetta dei teatri*; the Portuguese-language journal *Cronica dos teatros*; the German-language journal *Berliner Musikzeitung*; and, English-language journals *The Scotsman*, *The Brighton Guardian*, *The Daily News*, *The Times*, and *The Morning Post*.

¹⁸Treating for example the singers Anna de La Grange and Adelina Patti; the pianist Sigismond Thalberg; theoreticians Francisco Salinas and Ramos de Pareja; and composers Jaime Nadal, José Melchor Gomis, Manuel García, Rossini, Bellini, Meyerbeer, and Mozart.

In general, authors' signatures are rare. Most of the national information comes from local musicians and writers. Among those who signed their contributions are Francisco Asenjo Barbieri, Juan Carrera y Dagas, José Anselmo Clavé, Juan Fernández, Jorge Kastner, J. R. Flores, Manuel Climent, P. de la Parra and Julio Nombela.

There are six pseudonyms in the journal, five of which remain unidentified: "Roberto", "X.," "Un propietario de palco," "Clamor público," and "T. por Carmela." The sixth, "A. de Rovray" we have identified as Pier A. de Fiorentino.

This RIPM publication is based on the copy of the periodical in the Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona. It appears that the journal distributed a supplement, the *Album Musical*, which consisted on "eight pages of music for voice and piano or piano solo."¹⁹ In addition, subscribers received in series Hector Berlioz's *Le Chef d'orchestre: Théorie de son art*—translated into Spanish—the lectures on the *History of Music in Spain* given by Mariano Soriano Fuertes at the Ateneo Catalán and a volume of "Music News."²⁰ These supplements are not treated in this publication as they were not included in the copy of the journal upon which this work is based.²¹

Notes on the Calendar

Issues number 88 (1862) and 102 (1863) were missing in the microfilm. As we were unable to locate them, they are not accounted for in this publication. Two issues were numbered 175 in the journal. In order to differentiate them they are numbered 175 and 175a, respectively, in the Calendar. Also issue No. 126 is incorrectly numbered in the journal as No. 226. In the Calendar we have indicated the correct numbering within brackets [no. 126].

Notes on the Index

The professional or artistic function (baritone, ballerina, tenor, soprano, etc.) of individuals is identified only on their initial listing. Opera titles are identified in their complete form in the keyword header, even if cited frequently in an abbreviated version in the periodical. When foreign opera titles appear in their original language and in Spanish translation, both are maintained in the Index.

¹⁹Subscribers could also purchase two other supplements: *Album para los jóvenes artistas* (published every fortnight), and *Carnaval del Liceo* (published weekly). Issue no. 48 (26 January 1862) includes the list of music scores published by the journal.

²⁰Announced in *La Gaceta Musical Barcelonesa* 3, no. 106 (4 October 1863).

²¹The journal also offered subscribers the possibility of borrowing scores from the Music Store Budó (functioning as a library), and purchasing books at discounted price. See GMB 1, no. 2 (10 February 1861): 1.