

## ***Musica Viva (1936)***

*Musica Viva* [MUV]—a multilingual journal publishing articles in Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish—consists of only three issues, published respectively in April, July and October 1936.<sup>1</sup> Brussels, Rome, London and Zurich are identified as the places of publication. Initiated and edited by Hermann Scherchen, the well-known conductor and advocate of modern music, the journal served as a guide for the understanding of contemporary compositions and as a source of information on historical performance practice. The editor's office was in Rhode Saint-Genèse near Brussels, Belgium.

Every issue contains sixty-four pages and additional pages for supplements; pagination begins anew with every issue. Musical supplements in the form of manuscript facsimiles include a piano work by Ferruccio Busoni from *Die Nächtlichen, Variations on the Theme 'BACH'* by Hanns Eisler, two versions of a Fugue in C minor<sup>2</sup> and two minuets by Mozart, and a suite for lute by J. S. Bach.

Issues one and two are subdivided into four sections: “Melos Redivivum” [Melos Revived], “Werkstatt der Lebenden” [Workshop of the Living], “Spiegel der musikalischen Gegenwart” [Mirror of the Musical Present], and “Essai d'un catalogue de la musique orchestrale” [Attempt at a catalogue of orchestral music]. The third issue does not show the section titles but is similarly structured.

“Melos Redivivum” features articles on new compositional techniques, including writings by Hanns Eisler, Ernst Křenek and Roberto Gerhard about their own compositions, a discussion about music criticism led by Willy Tappolet and thoughts about the music festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music [ISCM] in Prague, 1935. Besides the importance of the term “melos” in the polyphony of modern and early music, the section title might also hint at *Melos* (Berlin: 1920-34),<sup>3</sup> an important German modern music journal also initiated by Scherchen.

The composer Vladimir Vogel, a student of Ferruccio Busoni and Heinz Tiessen, oversaw the second section, “Werkstatt der Lebenden.” It contains analyses and commentary on contemporary compositions. Hungarian critic Alexander Jemnitz contributed an extensive analysis of Bartók’s String Quartet no. 5, Igor Markevitch wrote

<sup>1</sup> A fourth issue was planned for January 1937 but did not appear. [See footnote on table of contents to issue no. 2.]

<sup>2</sup> MUV issue no. 1 contains the String Quartet (K. 546); MUV no. 2 contains the earlier version for two keyboards (K. 426).

<sup>3</sup> See Ole Hass, *Melos* 1920-1934. 3 vols. Répertoire international de la presse musicale (Baltimore, Maryland: NISC, 2005).

about his oratorio *Paradis perdu* and W. Zuckermann analyzed the use of folk music elements in Boris Semyonovich Schechter's [Shekhter] *Suite turkmène*.

The third section, "Spiegel der musikalischen Gegenwart," features musical reports from Norway, Denmark, the United States of America, the Soviet Union (with a discussion on the Soviet concepts of social realism and formalism), and insightful articles by Scherchen about the music of the Chinese theater, Turcoman music, and the music in the Egyptian oasis Siwa. In the third issue, this section contains a report on Scherchen's course in conducting in Geneva in August of 1936.

The final section deals with issues of historical performance practice. Each of the extensive articles—by Hans Ferdinand Redlich on instrumentation in Monteverdi's madrigals, Paul Collaer on an attempt to perform Monteverdi's *Ballo delle ingrate* and Cavalieri's *Rappresentazione di anima e di corpo*, and a report by Walter Robert Nef on an early music festival at the Schola Cantorum in Basle in July 1936—is introduced by Charles Van den Borren.

Half of the original articles in MUV are in German, about a third are in French and the remainder in Italian, English, Spanish or Dutch. The original language version of each article appears in large font. These are framed on the page by translations or detailed summaries (in German, English, French and Italian)<sup>4</sup> printed in smaller font. Even some of the advertisements<sup>5</sup> are translated or summarized.

Because the translations bring about a high level of repetitiveness in content, only the original articles have been annotated in this RIPM publication; the annotations are in the language of the article.<sup>6</sup> The titles of the many translations and summaries are noted in the Calendar.

This RIPM publication is based on a microfilm copy of MUV in the Harvard College Library.

<sup>4</sup> According to the footnotes on page sixty-four of every issue, German translations are by T. Rittmann and Scherchen, English by F. Preumont, French by S. van Haeren, I. Weterings and H. Cartier, and Italian by C. Astrologo.

<sup>5</sup> Only advertisements for the journal itself and for Scherchen's publishing firm, Ars Viva, appear in this journal.

<sup>6</sup> This results, of course, in a multilingual index.