

Rheinische Musik-Zeitung für Kunstfreunde und Künstler (1850-1859)

The *Rheinische Musik-Zeitung für Kunstfreunde und Künstler* [RMZ] was published by M. Schloss in Cologne from July 1850 to December 1859. Ludwig Bischoff, one of the leading music critics and writers of his time, was the journal's general editor from its inception until July 1853. Born on 27 November 1794 in Dessau, Bischoff earned a living as a teacher after completing a degree in philology in Berlin. In 1823 he became director of the Gymnasium in Wesel, where he was also in charge of the city orchestra and the Gesangverein [Singing society]. In 1836 Bischoff became music critic for the *Kölnische Zeitung*, a position he held until his death in 1867. After moving to Bonn in 1849, where he was involved in the founding of the Beethoven Society, Bischoff established the RMZ the following year. However, he withdrew from the journal in 1853, and later in the same year started another periodical, the *Niederrheinische Musik-Zeitung*,¹ published by DuMont-Schauburg in Cologne.

August Ferdinand Riccius, a musician and theologian, followed Bischoff as the RMZ's general editor. Born on 26 February 1819, he was, from 1849-55, director of the Euterpe concerts in Leipzig. In 1855 he succeeded Rietz as director of the Leipzig theater orchestra, and in 1864 went to Hamburg to work as a conductor and music critic.

Publication of the RMZ ceased at the end of the tenth volume because of the publisher's financial problems, which had surfaced as early as 1856. In the introduction to the seventh volume (1856), the publisher bemoaned the rising dominance of the daily press, which, he claimed, was taking over the role of the musical press and thus was drawing readers away from the RMZ.² In spite of a renewal in form and content in 1856, the journal did not fully recover. The last issue appeared on 24 December 1859.

According to Bischoff, the aim of the RMZ was "the creation of a publication that could further the true recognition of musical arts by the entire population of educated people."³ This goal, namely, to reach a wide audience (not only the experts) also influenced the language and form of the essays. A purely musicological approach was avoided. Rather, the aim was to shape the "scientific writing style into a people's writing style," and thus a language was formulated "to be understandable to every educated person, not just the musician."⁴

Reflections on the history and nature of music appear in the leading articles. Some of the latter deal with the newest developments in European instrumental and vocal music

¹ See Lisa Feuerzeig, *Niederrheinische Musik-Zeitung 1853-1867*, Répertoire international de la presse musicale (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI, 1990).

² M. Schloss, "An die geehrten Abonnenten" [To the honored subscribers], in RMZ 7, no. 1 (5. January 1856): 1.

³ Ludwig Bischoff, "Was wir wollen" [What we want], in RMZ 1, no. 1 (6 July 1850): 1-5.

⁴ Bischoff, *ibid.*

(particularly that of Germany, France, and Italy). Other articles deal with instrument making, the aesthetics of a widely understandable musical art, and the problems of modern music education. The RMZ's title points to its local focus. The regional emphasis is on the Rhineland (especially Cologne and its surroundings), and the journal reports on the high number of festivals and tours of singing societies in the area. In addition, many essays also treat musical activities in European capitals (Berlin, Paris, and London) and in the United States. These contributions mainly appear as reports or as excerpts from other newspapers and music journals (such as the *Süddeutsche Musikzeitung*, the *Grenzbote*, and the *Revue et Gazette musical de Paris*). Another emphasis is noted in reports on important "publications in the area of lyric and literary writing."⁵ Poems and short stories also appear, as do anecdotes and news about musical life.

The RMZ was published on the premise of total independence from its publisher and other institutions or persons, and on the impartiality and evenhandedness of the reporting.⁶ Again and again, freedom of speech within the RMZ is emphasized, and thus, short essays appear which do not conform to the opinions of the editors. Although in theory an absence of partisanship is attempted, in reality, the journal shows a clear rejection of the new German school. This attitude is reflected in a critical treatment of Richard Wagner and Franz Liszt on one side and an obvious adoration of Ludwig van Beethoven and Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy on the other. Thus the RMZ can be considered as a literary voice for the Rhenish school, opposing the views expressed in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, the journal of the new German school.

With the exception of the period from July to December 1853, when the journal appeared twice weekly and contained four pages, the RMZ usually appeared weekly in a two-column, eight-page format. The layout changed in 1856; the type size became larger and the pages were printed in single columns. This reduced the content of the journal by approximately half, in spite of the unchanged number of pages. The volumes initially begin on 1 July and end on 30 June of the following year. The fifth volume consists of only half a year (8 July to 30 December 1854), and the sixth and subsequent volumes begin with the first January issue. The numbering of issues and pages is continuous from volume one through the middle of volume four (31 December 1853). Numbering starts anew with the beginning of the next issue, and continues to the end of the fifth volume (30 December 1854). Subsequent volumes are numbered individually.

The structure of the RMZ remains fairly constant, although some otherwise regular sections are occasionally absent. The beginning of an issue usually features a two- to four-page leading article on aesthetics or an aspect of musical history. This was sometimes replaced with an in-depth review or analysis of an opera, by essays on important European musical institutions (for example, the concerts of the Gewandhaus in Leipzig or the Paris Conservatory), or in-depth musical reports from European cities.

⁵ Bischoff, *ibid.*

⁶ Bischoff, *ibid.*

These articles are followed by half-page reviews of musical events and publications, and at times biographical sketches of artists, and satires and anecdotes of musical life. The final part of the standard issue contains the *Tages- und Unterhaltungsblatt* [Daily and popular paper] in a smaller print, featuring shorter reports on musical life. Starting with the fifth volume, these are followed by the *Rundschau* [Overview], containing one- to four-line reports. The journal closes with an advertising section by the publisher for new sheet music, vacant job positions and announcements by the editorial staff. Supplements appear irregularly in the form of publisher's catalogues, announcements from the Rheinische Musikschule in Cologne, sheet music, and, in 1853, the monthly *Literaturblätter*, containing short reviews of music publications.

With the seventh volume, the RMZ changes not only its layout but also its emphasis in content. Leading articles and long reviews take a less important role; musical reports now take up most of the journal. The publisher justifies this alteration in light of increased coverage of aesthetic and scientific discussion in the feuilletons of the daily press. According to the publisher, readers are not interested in repeated coverage of the same topics. Also mentioned is the increasingly short life of information. Thus, the RMZ chose to concentrate on the "speedy communication of the most entertaining and the newest in the field of music"⁷ as well as on reviews and announcements of new sheet music.

The journal's preface names as contributors: Ferdinand Hiller, music director from Cologne, music writer Adolph Bernhard Marx, pianist Ignaz Moscheles, music historian François-Joseph Fétis, violinist and conductor Ch. H. Lübeck, professors Dr. Breidenstein and Dr. Heimsoeth from Bonn, music pedagogue Karl August Bertelsmann, conductor Carl Wilhelm and H. Winkelmeyer from Heidelberg. A large number of the contributions appear unsigned or signed with initials, single letters, numbers or special characters, which, for the most part, could not be identified. Maintaining the anonymity of its authors was one of the RMZ's principles, with few exceptions (for example, when the opinion of the author strayed from that of the editorial staff). Thus an attempt was made to communicate a homogenous image of the journal.

Notes to the User

Because only incomplete copies of the journal were available to us, several sources were used for the preparation of this publication; the microfiche copies of the RMZ at the Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main as well as original copies from the Lippische Landesbibliothek in Detmold, from the Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Bonn, and the Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek Cologne.

When, in all sources, supplements are missing, references to them are recorded in the catalogue for the sake of completeness. The 1853 *Literaturblätter* were bound into the

⁷ Announcement by the publisher, M. Schloss, op. cit.

volumes in different ways. In the catalogue, these supplements are treated at the end of the issue in the month they appeared.

The information from the *Tages- und Unterhaltungsblatt* was catalogued only in part. Criteria were length, relevance, and the content of the reports. The content of the *Rundschau* was not catalogued. In articles about individual concert events, only those entries that go beyond the mere mention of the event were treated.

When publishers are noted in reviews of newly-published music and books, the publisher's location is only given at its first mention. Words like *Pianofortebegleitung*, *Konzert*, and *Oper* were treated selectively in the index because of their frequency in the catalogue. The variants of the names of institutions and the different spellings and forms of foreign terms were not aligned; some topics are described in several locations in the index. This also applies to the names of works and instruments; thus, a reader looking up the word *Violine* should also look up *Violon*. German keywords are given in modern spelling (for example, *Konzert*, not *Concert*).