

Zeneirodalmi Szemle – Művészeti Lapok

In June 1894 Rózsavölgyi és Társa [Rózsavölgyi and Company]—Hungary’s most significant music publisher of the period and that of Liszt, Erkel, Mosonyi, Volkmann and a number of lesser known Hungarian composers—began publication of *Zeneirodalmi Szemle* [Review of Music Literature]. While the journal’s title changed to *Művészeti Lapok* [Arts Journal, Pages of Arts]—with issue thirteen of its second year (17 November 1895)—the new journal should be considered a continuation of the earlier publication for several reasons: the new publication continued the numbering sequence (of volumes and issues) of the earlier journal; it was produced by the same music publisher; and, it retained one of the earlier publication’s co-editors. In the 23 June 1896 issue (volume three, issue 13) an editorial communication announced a break for July and August, promising the next issue on 1 September. The promise however was not kept and the journal ceased publication.

The reasons for the journal’s demise were offered many years later in its publisher’s *Memoirs*: “In spite of the journal’s low price we could not gather a sufficient number of subscribers to support it. After two years of holding on and the loss of a huge amount of money, sacrificed on the altar of our national culture, we were obliged to cease its publication.”¹

The first five issues of *Zeneirodalmi Szemle* appeared monthly during “the first week of each month”.² Thereafter, publication became more frequent, but somewhat irregular, as the journal’s title page indicates: “Published in winter on the occasion of each concert, in summer during the first week of each month”.³ Issues of the *Művészeti Lapok*, on the contrary, were published with strict regularity “on the second Sunday of each month”.⁴

The character of, and differences between, the two journals were clearly revealed by their respective titles and subtitles. The initial title was *Zeneirodalmi Szemle* [Review of music literature] with a subtitle: *A zeneirodalom összes ágaira kiterjedő tematikai folyóirat* [Thematic periodical covering all the branches of the music literature]. From the fifth issue onwards, the subtitle was slightly modified: the word *zeneirodalom* [music literature] was replaced by *zeneművészet* [art of music], and the word *folyóirat* [periodical] by *szaklap* [professional review]. The change of title to *Művészeti Lapok* [Arts Journal] was well explained by the new subtitle which emphasized the journal’s manysidedness: *Zeneművészeti, képzőművészeti és színművészeti szaklap* [Professional review of music, arts and theater]. The decision to extend beyond the area of music was strange because Rózsavölgyi és Társa—a music publishing firm which printed music and music books, and organized concerts and musical performances—remained the proprietor. The intention to

¹ *A világ urai. Dunkel Norbert emlékiratai*. Budapest: Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda, [1927]. 27. p.

² Title pages from June to September 1894.

³ Title pages from October 1894 to October 28, 1895.

⁴ Title pages from November 17, 1895.

keep the continuity of the journal was clearly shown on the frontispiece where, besides to the new title the old one still appeared.

The journal was launched by Norbert Dunkl,⁵ proprietor of *Rózsavölgyi és Társa* [Rózsavölgyi and Company], and he alone edited the first three numbers. The publishing house and its music shop was founded in 1850 by the son of the composer, Márk Rózsavölgyi (1789—1848): Gyula Rózsavölgyi (1822—1861) in co-operation with Norbert Grinzweil (1823—1890). The sister of the latter, Jozefa Grinzweil, an important concert and opera singer of the period, married in 1861 Nepomuk János Dunkl, an excellent pianist and one-time pupil of Franz Liszt and Anton Rubinstein. After Gyula Rózsavölgyi's death he became for some years co-proprietor of the firm. It was however his son, Norbert Dunkl who showed more inclination for the business. From 1886 he followed his father as Grinzweil's company, and after his death in 1890 he became the only proprietor of the firm, still keeping the name. Norbert Dunkl as a dealer and concert manager did a great deal to develop the musical life in Pest which he believed should be similar to that of Vienna.

Born in 1862 in Vienna, Norbert Dunkl was brought up in Pest; from the age of four he studied piano with his father, and violin with some excellent first violinists of the National Theater Orchestra. As the family from the start wished him to become a music publisher and dealer, he worked from the beginning of the 80s for some years as apprentice at such famous European music dealers as the *Mensing* in Erfurt and the *Hug Frères* in Basle. Dunkl was a highly cultivated and quite talented businessman, very much aware of the fact that musical works needed not only to be published but also to be distributed and played. Among his significant contributions—in addition to editing and publishing a music journal—was the creation of a concert series known under the French title *Concerts populaires*. The series was organized in Pest in order to broaden the music culture of the middle-class public.

It is likely that Dunkl soon realized the limits of his editorial skills, because in September 1894 he took at his side as co-editor Andor Merkler (1862—1922), a noted music critic for several journals and reviews. Merkler studied music in the National Conservatory and later in the Budapest Academy of Music, but before obtaining his diploma he left and took a position at an insurance company. His activity as a composer could be testified to by a number of piano pieces and songs, in addition to a one act comic opera produced at the Budapest Opera House (*Fanchon*, 1890). As a matter of fact, Andor Merkler was the editor who insured the high level and continuity of the *Zeneirodalmi Szemle – Művészeti Lapok*, because at the moment of the title change, Dunkl reconfirmed Merkler in his position, and relinquished his own editorial seat to Gyula Kéry.

⁵ At the end of the 19th century the name was more frequently used as "Dunkl".

Gyula Kéry (1869–1919) studied law, then chose journalism as a career: from 1890 until the start of *Művészeti Lapok* he contributed to such journals as *Pécsi Figyelő*, *Pécsi Napló*, *Győri Hírlap* and *Budapesti Hírlap*. He wrote an operetta (produced in 1894), several historical studies (*The Life of Lujza Blaha*, *History of the Hungarian war of independence in daily chronicles*, *History and Catalogue of the Petőfi-House*), and the music and words of a number of songs.

The goal of the *Művészeti Lapok* and the division of responsibility of its editors were formulated by Norbert Dunkl:

I wanted to put on the table of the intelligent Hungarian art- and music-loving public a journal which makes it unnecessary to buy foreign language art journals. It was my intention to edit our journal in such a way that it could compete with any journals published abroad. I managed to convince Andor Merkler, who was for some time an excellent music critic for the *Magyarország*, to edit the musical part, and Gyula Kéry to edit the arts and literature sections. But even with *Művészeti Lapok*, I reached only a moral recognition.⁶

Initially, *Zeneirodalmi Szemle* was rather small, and consisted of only 6 pages. Gradually however the journal grew in size to 8–10–12 and finally, during the *Művészeti Lapok* period, to 16 pages—to which 4 or 8 unnumbered pages were added in front and back containing the frontispiece, contents, list of collaborators and advertisements. Under both titles the numbering restarted in each issue.

Although the continuity of the journal (despite its two titles) has been emphasized, the content, structure and staff varied from title to title and should be viewed separately, because there are some fundamental differences. Each issue of *Zeneirodalmi Szemle* opens with a leading article dealing with a significant musician, illustrated by a portrait. Columns such as “music news” and “review” follow; furthermore, the issues end with a series of music incipits which function as advertisement and which are selected from the works of the person treated in the lead article and in the review column. It can be seen from this that the journal was closely related to the publishing activity of the proprietor, since the persons and works selected were without exception from the publisher’s repertory. The expression “thematic” in the subtitle referred specifically to these music incipits.

During the *Zeneirodalmi Szemle* period articles, communications and reviews are mostly unsigned, which may indicate that the journal worked with rather few noted authors and that the articles were mostly written by the editors themselves. Two important articles are related to the series of signed leading portraits. These constitute a reciprocal “hommages”

⁶ See note No.1.

between two significant musicians who were not writers: the famous violinist Jenő Hubay and the composer pianist Károly Aggházy. In Vol. I, No. 6, Aggházy introduces the readers to Hubay; and in Vol. II, No.8, Hubay acts in kind towards Aggházy. Another important, anonymous but identifiable correspondent of the journal was the father of Norbert Dunkl, Nepomuk János Dunkl who published a very interesting article about his personal contact with the composer Károly Goldmark (Vol. I, No.4) and other reminiscences with the pen-name “egy ismeretes ismeretlen” [“a known unknown”].

In the volume II, issue 12 (28 October, 1895) we find a communication about the change of title, content and structure, quoted (slightly shortened) below:

The *Zeneirodalmi Szemle* has dealt so far exclusively with the musical world and gained keen interest within these limited circles. ...Because the enthusiasm and support of the reading public has been steadily growing: the *Rózsavölgyi és Társa* has decided to publish the journal under the new title *Művészeti Lapok*, in a more decorative layout and not as in the past monthly, but *twice monthly*. And in order to match the content to the decorative layout...it will extend its interest to *all the branches of the arts*, and will treat not only music literature, but also *the arts and theater*. ..To realize this promise faithfully we carefully selected highly professional editors for the individual columns, and we shall do our best also to win the best authors as contributors for the *Művészeti Lapok*... From November 17 onwards, the *Művészeti Lapok* will appear on each second Sunday with the division as follows: On the cover title page there will always be *an illustration of current interest* from the art world.⁷ The inside content will open with *an article also of current interest*. Thereafter in the column *Music* we will treat events from the world of music be it sacred or secular, with *special regard to the cultivation of domestic music*. Under the title *Arts* the *sculpture and painting* will be treated. The column *Theater* will be devoted to the theatrical events from the *capital, province and abroad*. The *Arts chronicle* will be a rich mine of news and original information regarding all the branches of the arts. The *Reviews* column will contain criticism of published art products. And in order to make our journal more amusing and varied, in the column entitled *Bohém-világ [Bohemian World]* anecdotes and stories about famous artists (composers, painters, actors and sculptors) will be gathered. Under the title *Szalon [Saloon]* the reader will find short stories or novels based on lives of artists. Finally, each month our readers will be surprised with an *hors texte* music supplement, containing examples of compositions as yet unpublished.⁸

⁷ This was not realized. The richly decorated cover title is always the same.

⁸ This was similarly not realized.

The considerably long list of collaborators includes such distinguished personalities of the musical press as Kornél Ábrányi sen., one-time editor of the *Zenészet*i Lapok and the *Zenészet*i Közlöny, Jenő Sztojanovits and Dezső Ambrozovics dr., one-time editor and principal contributor of the *Zenevilág*, and István Kereszty, noted music critic of several newspapers. The theatrical criticism was headed by Sándor Hevesi and Count Sándor Vay who frequently used the pseudonym D'Artagnan. Among the contributors there are number of famous writers such as Mór Jókai, Baron Kálmán Jósika and Jenő Heltay, the actors Lehel Odry and Kornélia Prielle, and important personalities including Count Albert Apponyi, Minister of Religion and Education.

The following table lists identified pseudonyms and initials of contributors:

Authors	Pseudonyms
Ambrozovics Dezső	dr.-br-, -br.-, Br.
Bloch József	B- -CH.
Brück Gyula	B. Gy.
Dunkl Nepomuk János	egy ismeretes ismeretlen
Erdős (Eibenschütz) Ármin	E. Á.
Gergely István	Gregorius
Heltay Jenő	Eugenius
Hevesi Sándor	H. S., (HS.)
Kereszty István	K-r Eszti, -y, +y., +Y., -y., X.-y., X.Y.
Langer Viktor	Tisza Aladár
Luby Sándor	Lantos
Molnár Géza dr.	M. G., Dr. M. G.
Őszi Kornél	Ő.
Polgár Jenő	P. J.
Rózsa Miklós	Tövis
Szemlér Ferenc	Sz. F.
Tarnay Alajos	T. A.
Téglás Gábor ifj.	ifj. T. G.
Vay Sándor gróf	D'Artagnan
Vay Sarolta grófné	Czelesztin
Zöldi Márton	Luczián

This publication is based upon the copy of *Zeneirodalmi Szemle* found in the Central Library of the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, to our knowledge the only available copy in the country. Unfortunately, issue three of the first year is missing. A complete copy of *Művészeti Lapok* was found in the collection of the National Széchényi Library. Finally, the reader should note that in the Catalogue the text is cited as it appears in the original

(i.e. a dotted “i” or “ü” might today appear as “í” and “ű”). In bracketed editorial commentary and in the leadterms of the Index today’s orthography is employed.