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EINAR NILSON – COMPOSER OF THE FIRST *JEDERMANN* MUSIC



Nilson in Chicago in the 1920s at the time of The Miracle tour

‘When Einar Nilson went to school in his home town of Kristianstad in Sweden, he had one great ambition: to become an orchestra conductor. It frequently happened that travelling theatre troupes engaged the 15-year old boy to wield the baton at their performances in the Kristianstad theatre, when the regular conductor, for one reason or another, was unable to attend to his duties. Once it happened that the theatrical director offered him a good salary to follow the troupe on tour. Einar accepted the offer, leaving family, teachers, books and school mates. Years later we find Einar Nilson in Berlin, as conductor of the mighty orchestra of Max Reinhardt [1873–1943], the greatest European theatrical director of all time.’¹

In this way Einar Nilson was introduced to readers of the *Pacific Coast Viking* in the USA in 1936 before the *Jedermann* (*Everyman*) performance in the Hollywood Bowl in California, but he is virtually unknown to audiences today. Even in Salzburg, where his most famous composition *Jedermann* was played at the Salzburg Festival for decades from 1920 onwards, he is known only by name.

The aim of this article is to present the person and composer Einar Nilson for the first time. The article is based on material and information from private and public sources and interviews with Nilson’s descendants. Einar Nilson has remained in oblivion because he concentrated on composing and arranging music that was needed for the plays in theatre performances. In addition, he was a skilful conductor and

¹ Newspaper clipping, *Pacific Coast Viking* 1936, Private archive

organizer, and Reinhardt's musical advisor for decades. Nilson also had a position as chief of the music department in Reinhardt's theatre.

Reinhardt worked with many contemporary composers, including Engelbert Humperdinck and Richard Strauss (1864–1949). But none of these composers had such a close and tight relationship to him as Einar Nilson, whose life is so closely intertwined with Reinhardt's that it is often not possible to talk about Einar Nilson in isolation. Researching Einar Nilson revealed many new facts about Reinhardt as a theatre director and his views about music as well as his personality. As a person Nilson had the appearance of a Scandinavian. He was kind, shy, considerate and had a smaller ego than Reinhardt, whom he obeyed.

Nilson lived a cosmopolitan life and had amazing networks in the cultural and artistic world. He was born in Sweden, worked in Germany and Austria and travelled to perform around Europe. He also worked in the USA in the 1920s, and in the 1930s moved there, becoming a US citizen in 1936. Therefore, he was nowhere regarded as 'one of their own', not even in his country of birth, Sweden. He was Jewish on his mother's side and left Germany in 1933 for Austria, as did many other Jews, continuing shortly afterwards to the USA. In the studies concerning Jewish musicians who emigrated from Europe to the USA in the 1930s there is no mention of him.²

Theatre music is generally regarded as of such minor importance that it is seldom mentioned. As early as 1916 Heinrich Maurer wrote in connection with Max Reinhardt's ballet pantomime production of *The Green Flute* based on a story by Hugo von Hofmannsthal (1874–1929), for which Einar Nilson had arranged music by Mozart: 'Hardly any branch of our creative music has been treated in such a stepmotherly way as incidental music. It is almost as if it were a hybrid into which it is difficult to respond to.'^{3 4}

In an interview in the late 1920s, Nilson explained that the number of his incidental music scores had reached around a hundred.⁵ They were in very different styles: incidental music for classical and modern plays, ballet pantomimes etc. He made arrangements of the music of various composers: Mozart, Offenbach, Rameau, Bizet and Handel. He composed also music in the style of Lully and Donizetti, depending on the play. There are full scores for orchestra (such as *Jedermann* and *Das Salzburger Grosse Welttheater*, both by Hugo von Hofmannsthal) and music for smaller ensembles, interludes and short pieces, musical and sound effects. Nilson did not compile orchestral suites from his stage music.

Only a few of Nilson's compositions have been preserved. Some of them have been published: the 'Marsch und Tanzlied' from *Jedermann*, gipsy songs from Tolstoy's *The Living Corpse* and two arrangements of music for Hugo von Hofmannsthal's ballet pantomimes (*The Green Flute* and *Prima Ballerina*).⁶

There were three productions in particular that were part of Nilson's career for decades: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Miracle* and *Jedermann*.

² Brinkmann-Wolff 1999; Weber 1994

³ Kaum ein Zweig unserer schaffenden Tonkunst wird eigentlich so stiefmütterlich behandelt als die Bühnen-musik. Gerade als ob sie ein Zwitterding wäre, mit dem man kaum etwas Rechtes anfangen kann). (Newspaper clipping, Private archive

⁴ Nilson's name appears in some older German and Swedish music dictionaries, but after 1975 it disappears. (Einstein 1926; Riemann 1922, 1929, 1961, 1975; Sohlmans 1951). There is a lot of research about Reinhardt and his theatre, about directing, the actors' work, scene design, lightning, costumes, theatre space, but very little about the music used in the performances.

⁵ Newspaper clipping 1928, Private archive

⁶ In different archives there are only a few Nilson's musical manuscripts. The archive of the Deutsches Theater has no musical material by Nilson at all, though he worked there for over twenty years.

Nilson started his career with Reinhardt by playing in the orchestra in a performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1905. After that he himself conducted Mendelssohn's music in Berlin and on tours hundreds of times during his years with Reinhardt, and he also conducted the music at the Hollywood Bowl performances in 1934 and on US tours.

The second was *The Miracle*, for which Humperdinck had composed the music. Nilson was one of the assistant conductors at the première in London in 1911; later he conducted the music on tours in Europe and Berlin in the 1910s. Nilson conducted, rehearsed and organized the music in the 1920s for hundreds of performances in the USA. He also conducted the last performances of the production in London in 1932.

The third score was his own, *Jedermann*. Nilson composed music for its première in 1911 in Berlin and conducted it on tours in Europe. He also conducted his music in Salzburg in the 1920s and 1930s and also at the Hollywood Bowl in 1936. After World War II Nilson's *Jedermann* has been performed for decades in Salzburg.

EINAR NILSON'S FAMILY AND EARLY YEARS

Einar Berhard Nilson was born on 21st February 1881 in Kristianstad, Sweden. He came from a Swedish musical family. His father Nils (1841–1913) was a conductor and organist in the main Protestant church in Kristianstad and also his grandfather Hans (1808–84) was a musician and organist.

His mother Tekla Alexandra Salmson (1847–1914) came from a famous Jewish family. Einar Nilson's great-grandfather Samuel Salmson had arrived from Germany to Sweden in the late 18th century to work for the King of Sweden as an engraver. Most of his descendants were artists, but Einar Nilson's grandfather Fredrik Ludvig Salmson (1813–73) was a merchant. He was married to the Finnish-born Matilda Carolina Perlberg, who had moved to Stockholm in 1838 when she was 26 years old. Their daughter Tekla Alexandra had an elder brother Hugo Salmson (1843–94), Einar Nilson's uncle. He was a famous painter who worked in Paris and whose works can be seen in art museums in Sweden, Denmark, France and Washington, D.C.

Einar had two older sisters, Astrid and Siri, who were six and two years old when Einar was born, and one brother, Gunnar who was four. Four years later a younger sister, Adela, was born. In his young years Einar used to play the violin in a family trio where his father Nils played the cello and brother Gunnar the piano.



***Einar Nilson playing in the family trio at home in Kristianstad at the end of the 1890s:
Einar, violin, brother Gunnar, piano and father Nils, cello***

Kristianstad is situated by a short river connecting two lakes in southern Sweden in the province of Skåne. In the late 19th century Kristianstad was a significant town though it had only around 10,000 inhabitants. It was the capital of the province, had the High Court of Southern Sweden and a large artillery regiment, for which Nilson later wrote a march.

The main church, where Einar's father worked as an organist, is regarded as the most beautiful Renaissance church in Northern Europe. Kristianstad had a theatre and travelling companies came from Stockholm and performed plays by Shakespeare, Ibsen and Molière and lighter entertainment such as Gilbert and Sullivan. Concerts were also arranged in the town. Famous musicians from Europe performed there on their way to Stockholm, and Einar attended the concerts by the famous French violinist Henri Marteau (1874–1934) as well as the Joseph Joachim Quartet from Berlin. (Nilson)

Einar went to the High School that had been established in 1858 as a school for boys only. It had a classical curriculum and employed prominent teachers in literature.⁷

After finishing school in Kristianstad Nilson started his musical studies in Stockholm at the Kungliga Musikhögskolan (Royal College of Music) where he studied the violin in 1898–99.⁸ Nilson studied violin under the Finnish violin professor Johan Lindberg (1837–1914) who had studied with Joseph Joachim (1831–1907).^{9 10}

He could also have had the chance to pursue a military career in his home town, but he was not interested. When he was 22 years old he did not know what to do – and later blamed this on the fact that everything ripens more slowly in Scandinavia. His father therefore told him to go abroad and study music. (Nilson)

EINAR NILSON IN BERLIN AND REINHARDT'S THEATRE

In the spring of 1903 Nilson intended to go to Switzerland to study in Geneva with the famous French violin virtuoso Henri Marteau, whom he had heard in his home town earlier. On his way there, in the train, he met the famous Norwegian mezzo-soprano Berglit Bjørnson (1869–1953), daughter of the Nobel prize writer Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson and married to the politician Sigurd Ibsen, son of the playwright Henrik Ibsen. She advised Nilson to study music in Berlin rather than Geneva, as Berlin was the centre of musical and theatrical life in Europe at the time. Nilson jumped out of the train in Berlin without knowing where to go. After staying a few days in a modest hotel on Unter den Linden he found a small apartment. (Nilson)

Musical life in Berlin was lively in the beginning of the last century, and many prominent musicians were there. At that time Richard Strauss was conducting at the Berlin Royal Opera; he was to become general manager (Generalmusikdirektor) in the following years. Arthur Nikisch (1855–1922) was principal conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic, a position he held until his death. There were also other conductors performing with these orchestras, such as the Austrian Felix von Weingartner (1863–1942), later to be conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Italian-born musical multitalent Ferruccio Busoni

⁷ Two of Einar's schoolmates were later members of the Swedish Academy. Both of them have described their school years in their literary work. (Hellström 1927; Böök 1940)

⁸ Written information from Archivist Sebastian Lindholm, Musikverket. Musik och teaterbibliotek Stockholm, letter 2.5.2019. In the archive there is no proof that he ever took any exam.

⁹ Newspaper clipping, Private archive

¹⁰ Some sources state that Nilson had also studied at the University of Lund, but that is incorrect; at the University there is no document stating that he studied there. (Written information from Archivist Robert Iwenstam, Lunds universitet, Lund, letter 26 April 2019)

(1866–1924). During the following years Einar Nilson was to become personally acquainted with these conductors, all of whom were senior to him, Arthur Nikisch being a quarter of a century older.

Einar Nilson enrolled at the Music School (Hochschule für Musik zu Berlin). His acceptance in a crowded field of applicants made the news in Sweden.¹¹ He joined in October 1904 and stayed until Easter 1907. He studied the violin with Andreas Moser.¹²

Andreas Moser (1859–1925) was an Austrian-born violinist who had studied with Joseph Joachim and now, as a professor, prepared students for him. The Russian-born composer Paul Juon (1872–1940) taught Nilson composition and theory.¹³ Nilson took some composition lessons with Max Bruch (1838–1920) who was also a teacher at the Hochschule. Nilson studied with Engelbert Humperdinck privately, since Humperdinck was not a professor at the Music School. (Nilson) Conducting did not become a teaching discipline until after Nilson had left the School.¹⁴

In 1905 he had his first encounter with Max Reinhardt's theatre. In January the première of Reinhardt's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* had taken place in the Neues Theater am Schiffbauerdamm (today that theatre building is used by the Berliner Ensemble). In the spring of 1905 one of Nilson's fellow students, who played the violin in the orchestra, took an Easter holiday and asked Einar to step in for him. After the holidays the student did not return to the orchestra, so Einar could stay there. (Nilson)

Because of this Nilson did not attend the Music School during the summer term. He returned to his studies in October 1905¹⁵ and continued playing in Reinhardt's theatre, in different productions. (Nilson) As a member of the orchestra Nilson soon learned what theatre music is all about. The conductor of the theatre orchestra was Gustav Hollaender (1855–1915) and after Nilson had played in the orchestra for a while, Hollaender promoted him to leader and his assistant.¹⁶

Nilson finished his studies at the Music School in the spring of 1907. He did not gain a diploma, but that was nothing unusual since most of the students did not do so. In the academic year 1906–07 only three out of 372 pupils received it.¹⁷ The same year the headmaster and violin professor Joseph Joachim died, ending an era at the Music School that had lasted for decades. He was succeeded by the Frenchman Henri Marteau, and Engelbert Humperdinck assumed the position of professor of composition after Max Bruch in 1911.¹⁸

STARTING HIS CAREER AS A CONDUCTOR

After finishing his studies, Nilson took a position as musical director of an opera company that toured Germany. This was a good way of starting a conducting career, gaining experience in provincial towns before heading back to Berlin. Nilson conducted operas and operettas, especially in Lower Silesia (today part of Poland). His conducting was described in local newspapers: the reviews show that Nilson was especially competent in conducting music in the context of theatrical performances.

¹¹ Newspaper clipping, Private archive

¹² Written information from Antje Kalcher 22nd March 2019, Universität der Künste Berlin, University of Arts, University Archives

¹³ Kalcher 2019

¹⁴ Schenk 2004, p. 146

¹⁵ Kalcher 2019

¹⁶ Newspaper clipping, Private archive

¹⁷ Kalcher 2019

¹⁸ Schenk 2004, p. 145–146

The review of a performance of the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta *The Mikado* states: 'Also the conducting of the operetta by Mr Nilson was completely on the highest level. Already in the overture you could distinctly notice the very special talent of the new master on the podium. He confidently and professionally showed every entry of the various instruments of his orchestra, which followed him with the precision and accuracy that our 58-player strong orchestra is known for.'¹⁹ Another comment revealed his ability to handle the co-operation between the stage and orchestra.²⁰

In Verdi's opera *Il trovatore*, Nilson's conducting was complimented for its precision: 'The orchestra contributed very much to the success of the opera under the strict conducting by Mr Nilson.'²¹ Nilson conducted many other works during that time, among them Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and operettas by Johann Strauss.²²

After gaining this conducting experience, Nilson returned to Berlin. During the spring season of 1909 he secured a position in Reinhardt's theatres as a conductor. During that time he became acquainted with the writer Hugo von Hofmannsthal, with whom he was to collaborate extensively, composing music for his plays. (Nilson)

In the summer of 1909 Nilson accompanied Reinhardt's theatre on tours in Munich and Frankfurt am Main, where a performance of *Medea* by Franz Grillparzer at the the first International Aeronautical Exhibition was interrupted by the arrival of Count Zeppelin's dirigible airship. Nilson writes: 'At the noisy sound of motors, the audience, stagehands, dressers – everybody – emptied the theatre in two minutes... After half an hour the performance continued.' (Nilson).

Three months after this, in December, Nilson conducted his own music for the Christmas tale *To Mars in a Zeppelin (Im Zeppelin zum Mars)* by one of Reinhardt's actresses, Elisabeth Weirauch, at the Deutsches Theater.²³ This was directed by Berthold Held and was one of the many scores Nilson wrote for Reinhardt's theatre before he composed his first music for productions directed by Reinhardt.

FIRST COMPOSITIONS FOR REINHARDT AND NILSON'S LULLY

On tour in Budapest in the spring of 1910, Nilson was responsible for the whole musical apparatus for the first time, conducting Humperdinck's music in a performance of *The Winter's Tale* by Shakespeare. After that, Nilson became personally acquainted with Reinhardt, becoming a member of the latter's inner circle when they went to listen to gipsy music at the Cafe Orpheum, which still exists today. (Nilson) Later that same year Reinhardt performed at the Künstler-Theater in Munich. As he had done in Budapest, Nilson

¹⁹ 'Auch die musikalische Direktion der Operette durch Herrn Kapellmeister Nilson stand vollkommen auf der Höhe. Schon in der Ouvertüre gab sich das stark ausgeprägte Talent des neuen Herrn am Dirigentenpulte deutlich zu erkennen. Er markierte sicher und sachkundig jeden Einsatz der einzelnen Instrumente seines Orchesters, und dieses folgte ihm mit der bei den Mitgliedern unserer 58er Kapelle hinlänglich bekannten Präzision und Akkuratessse' (Newspaper clipping, *Neue Niederschlesische Zeitung*, Private archive)

²⁰ 'und [Nilson] suchte mit sicherer Hand das Einvernehmen zwischen Bühne und Orchester aufrecht zu erhalten.' (Newspaper clipping, *Niederschlesischer Anzeiger*, Private archive)

²¹ ('Nicht wenig trug das Orchester unter der straffen Leitung der Herrn Nilson zum Gelingen der Oper bei.') (Newspaper clipping, *Niederschlesischer Anzeiger*, 13th November 1908, Private archive)

²² Newspaper clippings, *Neue Niederschlesische Zeitung*, *Niederschlesischer Anzeiger*, Private archive

²³ Newspaper clipping, Private archive

conducted *The Winter's Tale* and the popular oriental pantomime *Sumurun*. During this time in Munich Reinhardt asked Nilson to compose music for a coming Molière performance. Nilson explains:

'He [Reinhardt] was rehearsing Moliere's *Le Mariage forcé* and I, being curious, used to sneak in, take a seat far back in the dark stalls and watch. One day Reinhardt came to find out who was sitting there in the darkness, and after recognizing me, told me that he needed some music for the play – a few bars here and there for entrances and exits, and at the end of the play, all the actors should celebrate in a gay minuet – the "happy ending" – "Why don't you try to write something" was Reinhardt's suggestion – This was the first time he had asked me to compose for a production of his own. "Well", I said, "I will try!" – After rehearsal and a few inspiring words from Reinhardt I went home and wrote a few little pieces and a complete minuet, all in an adequate style, and played them for Reinhardt the next day. He liked the music. Result: Brother Edmund gave me a five years contract (An offer of less would have been an insult in those happy days.) Modest salary but generous royalties for every note written.' (Nilson)

Molière's *Le Mariage forcé* (*Die Heirat wider Willen*) was the first score that Nilson wrote for Reinhardt's theatrical productions²⁴. At the same time he composed music for Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* (*Die Komödie der Irrungen*) as well. Both of these performances were at the Künstler-Theater in Munich on 21st September 1910. Later these two plays were performed in Berlin where they were well received. The newspapers wrote about the Molière: 'The small orchestra in Louis XIV-style costumes took its place on the side of the stage, a lute player stood in the wings and accompanied the acting melodramatically with gracious music by Einar Nilson.'²⁵

Another writer revealed also some of the listeners of Nilson's music: 'The attractive music was by Einar Nilson and the small orchestra sat dressed in the style of the play down at the side in the stalls; and in the stalls themselves there was plenty of music because, not far from Richard Strauss, Siegfried Wagner was sitting.'²⁶

Later, Nilson would often compose music for Reinhardt's Molière productions, for example for *George Dandin* in the spring of 1912. The première took place at the Deutsches Theater on 13th April 1912. For this performance Nilson composed music in the style of Lully, but everybody believed it was by Lully himself! As Nilson explains:

'He [Reinhardt] had always definitely made up his mind before giving his orders. Stern [designer Ernst Stern] was given a few lines, drawn by Reinhardt with surprising talent, on any piece of paper, indicating situations and places. I, representing a department for which Reinhardt had a healthy instinct but no positive knowledge, had to be satisfied with a gesture suggesting a rhythm, or was advised that it should be some music in the style of this one or that one. When a play by Molière, for instance, was in preparation, and it came to the usual conversation about the music to be written, it was always the same story: "You must use music by Lully". Molière could not be alone on the programme. His famous inseparable partner, Monsieur Jean-Baptiste Lully, had to be there too – just like 275 years ago in Versailles! And he was always there – in *Le Mariage forcé*, or in *Le Malade imaginaire*, and in *George Dandin* as well, but he never contributed a single note! – When it was time for *George Dandin*, I spent weeks in the State Library in

²⁴ see about the play and translation in Hofmannsthal 2006a

²⁵ 'Ein kleines Orchester im Louis-Quatorze-Kostüm nahm an der Seite der Bühne Platz, ein Lautenspieler stand an der Kulisse und begleitete die Reden melodramatisch mit einer graziösen Musik von Einar Nilson.' (Newspaper clipping, Private archive. See also Fiedler 1972b, p.17, cit. H.F., *Der Tag* (II), 8th October 1910)

²⁶ 'Die liebenswürdige Musik war von Einar Nilson, und das kleine Orchester sass im Kostüm des Stückes unten seitwärts im Parkett, und im Parkett selbst war auch viel Musik, denn nicht weit von Richard Strauss sass Siegfried Wagner.' (Newspaper clipping, Private archive. See also Fiedler 1972b, p. 19-20, cit. Fritz Engel, *Berliner Tagblatt*, 8th October 1910)

Berlin, annoying my good friend, the music librarian Professor Wilhelm Altmann, with Lully. Everything Lully had composed – which is a lot – was there. I got tired of it. It seemed hopeless to try to fit the existing lyrics by Karl Vollmoeller [who translated Molière from French into German] to Lully’s music. There were recitatives and arias and ballets between every scene. I gave up and decided to “fake” the whole thing. No one ever noticed anything. Jean-Baptiste Lully got the credit, not having the opportunity to protest, but I received, and rightly so, the royalties.” (Nilson)

At the performances Nilson himself played the harpsichord.²⁷

ARENA PERFORMANCES AND JEDERMANN

In the early 1910s Reinhardt started to produce grand performances in the style of ancient Greek theatre. He thus chose large venues such as permanent circus arenas because they were like Greek amphitheatres and had space for a large number of performers. The first arena performance for which Nilson composed music was *King Oedipus* by Sophocles in Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s adaption and translation. The first performance was in the large Musikfesthalle in Munich in September 1910 and Nilson himself conducted the music.²⁸ The play was performed after that in Berlin. In 1911 Reinhardt’s *Oedipus* production travelled around Germany and Europe. Nilson was an important figure in organizing one of these tours in the spring which travelled to Rīga, St Petersburg and Stockholm. The production was also performed in London in 1912 with Nilson’s music.

For the next arena performance, *Oresteia (Die Orestie)* by Aeschylus in Munich in 1911, Nilson again composed the music. Originally a score for it had been composed by Otto Klemperer (1885–1973), but Alexander von Zemlinsky, who was to conduct the performance, did not like it.²⁹ After this performance in Munich, Reinhardt introduced Nilson to Richard Strauss. (Nilson). A few months after this, *Oresteia* was performed at the Zirkus Schumann in Berlin.

Nilson wrote an article about the arena performances, *Die Musik in der Arena*, published in 1911, and later *Musik bei Reinhardt* (1918) in which he describes Reinhardt’s use of ‘Sprechchor’. He also describes his collaboration with Reinhardt in the creative process of this kind of drama: ‘Here he [Reinhardt] has written what amounts to an actual score. The speakers are divided into groups which correspond to the singing voices of a choir. By omitting several words, a given sentence of the text is shortened for that group which is to join in later, and so on from group to group, until, at a given moment, the entire chorus is heard in full, powerful unison. All this is no matter of mere chance, but is exactly graded as to the intensity and pitch of the tone. This spoken score is accentuated by sounds from different musical instruments, consisting chiefly of open chords on harps, sustained chords on stringed instruments, the peals of the organ and the thundering of percussion instruments, grouped in a manner similar to the arrangement of the speaking chorus which they accompany.’^{30 31}

²⁷ Newspaper clipping, Private archive

²⁸ Hofmannsthal 1983, p. 682

²⁹ Flashar 1989, p. 683 fn 116

³⁰ Nilson 1924: Music under Reinhardt

³¹ ‘Er [Reinhardt] schreibt sozusagen eine Partitur. Die Chöre werden in Gruppen eingeteilt, die mit den Gesangstimmen in einem mehrstimmigen Chorwerk zu vergleichen sind. Ein Satz des Chortextes wird an verschiedenen Stellen durch Wegnahme von Worten für eine später beginnende Gruppe abgekürzt, und so fort durch mehrere Stufungen, um die Sprechenden dann in geeigneten Moment mit voller Kraft unisono einsetzen lassen zu können. Das alles geschieht nicht willkürlich, sondern ist seinem Stärkegrad und in seiner Tonhöhe genau abstimmt. Untermalt wird diese „gesprochene Partitur“ noch durch den Klang verschiedener Instrumente, in der Hauptsache durch gebrochene Akkorde auf Harfen, ausgehaltenen Akkorde auf Streichinstrumente, das oben erwähnte

After *Oedipus* and *Oresteia* came a medieval morality play, Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Jedermann*, the play of the rich man's death. It was performed for the first time at the Zirkus Schumann in Berlin on 1st December 1911. The main role was played by Alexander Moissi (1879–1936). Einar Nilson had composed the music, and he conducted it as well. After the performance Hofmannsthal wrote to Nilson and advised him to publish his music:

'Once again thank you for your music to *Jedermann* and I would like to say that Richard Strauss told me about it *very* appreciatively; and I would like to advise you that I would be keen for you to be in contact with S. Fischer so that the music would be printed and, while protecting your rights as composer, would in future be distributed by him to the provincial theatres. I shall instruct Fischer.'³²

The *Marsch und Tanzlied* from that score were published in 1912 by Bote and Bock.

After Berlin, Reinhardt and his company toured with this production in circus arenas, large halls and theatres in many cities, starting in January 1912: Hamburg (Zirkus Busch), Leipzig, Cologne, Vienna (Zirkus Busch), Budapest, Prague and Frankfurt. The production was performed in Berlin in different theatres over a period of several years.³³

Nilson's music was played at the Salzburg Festival from 1920 onwards as part of the 'triple act' of Hofmannsthal-Reinhardt-Nilson. For the production in New York in late 1927 Nilson revised his own music; it was then played the following year at the Salzburg Festival as well as in Dortmund. Nilson revised his music once again in 1936 for performances at the Hollywood Bowl. In Salzburg Nilson had to consent to the fact that locals were given the opportunity to 'add' to his original music.

THE MIRACLE

Gustav Vollmoeller's pantomime *The Miracle*, a story about a nun who falls from grace and the Madonna who takes her place until her penitent return,³⁴ with music by Engelbert Humperdinck, had its première in London in 1911. The performance was in Olympia, London's largest covered space, which could accommodate 8,000 spectators. This production by Reinhardt with 2,000 actors, a choir of 500, an orchestra of 200 with a large organ was a great success.³⁵ Humperdinck's music was conducted by Gustav Hollaender.³⁶

Nilson was there: the performance needed six conductors for the choir, as the venue was very large. The furthest members of the choir were standing so far away that they had to start singing before the ones standing at the front, so that the sound of the voices would reach the audience at the same time. This was achieved by having a number of conductors standing on different places within the choir.³⁷

Orgelgeräusch und das Dröhnen von Schlagsinstrumenten, die, was ihre Mischung anbetrifft, ähnlich wie die Sprechchöre, welche sie begleiten soll, behandelt werden.' (Nilson 1918: Musik bei Reinhardt)

³² 'ich möchte nochmals für Ihre Musik zu *Jedermann* danken, möchte Ihnen sagen, dass Richard Strauss sich zu mir sehr anerkennend darüber aussprach und möchte Sie wissen lassen, dass ich wünschen würde Sie setzen sich mit S. Fischer in dem Sinn in Verbindung, dass die Musik reproduziert und, unter Wahrung Ihres materiellen Vorteils, von ihm an die Provinztheater späterhin vertrieben wird. Ich Instruiere Fischer.' (Hofmannsthal to Einar Nilson, December 1911, Private archive. See also Hofmannsthal 1990, p.269)

³³ Later in the 1920s Reinhardt's production toured in Basel (1926), New York (1927), Dortmund (1928) and Vienna (1929) as well. (Newspress clippings, Private archive; Huesmann 1983; 595, 611, 739, 777, 792, 1945, 2522, 2593)

³⁴ Styan 1982, p. 95–96

³⁵ Styan 1982, p. 93, 100

³⁶ Huesmann 1983, 2452; Le Men 2017, p. 59–83; Segol 2017, p. 85–103

³⁷ Newspaper clipping, Private archive

After that there were performances in Vienna in 1912, and the following year it started touring (until 1914) in Prague, Vienna, Leipzig, Dresden, Breslau (now Wrocław in Poland), Cologne, Frankfurt, Karlsruhe and Hamburg. Nilson was the main conductor in performances of *The Miracle* in Reinhardt's productions in Frankfurt, Hamburg and elsewhere.³⁸ After touring, performances began in Berlin in the spring of 1914 and continued until 1916 with almost 80 performances conducted by Nilson.³⁹ *The Miracle* toured in Sweden in 1917 too, where a newspaper wrote: 'The conductor Einar Nilson performed Humperdinck's music with a firm hand.'⁴⁰

There were plans to take *The Miracle* to the USA in 1914, but the outbreak of World War I scuppered these ideas. Nilson later travelled with *The Miracle* to the USA in 1923. The work then became part of Nilson's life for many years.⁴¹

THE LIVING CORPSE AND SHAKESPEARE

In the 1910s Nilson composed music for many other Reinhardt productions, including *Minna von Barnhelm* by G.E. Lessing which was performed in Berlin's Schloss Bellevue (today the residence of German President) for Emperor Wilhelm II. He also composed music for Gerhardt Hauptmann's *Festival in German Rhymes* (*Festspiel in Deutschen Reimen*) in 1913 in Breslau. The performances were in the Jahrhunderhalle which could accommodate thousands of spectators. Beside Nilson, Richard Strauss composed for this festive performance an Overture (*Königsmarsch*). Emperor Wilhelm II was present at both these performances. Nilson also composed music to *Dantons Death* by Georg Büchner, which included whistling the *Marseillaise*.

In 1913 Nilson composed music for Leo Tolstoy's play *The Living Corpse* (*Der lebende Leichnam*). In Tolstoy's play there are gypsies who are singing and playing. Accordingly Nilson wrote songs in gypsy style, accompanied by piano and guitar. The music was published by Bote & Bock in the same year with the title *Zigeunerlieder*. The play had been published in German translation in 1911, after Tolstoy's death, and it became extremely popular at the beginning of the last century. Reinhardt directed the play for the first time in 1913 with Alexander Moissi in the the main role as Fedja. During that year it was performed 128 times at the Deutsches Theater and was a great success for Moissi.⁴²

The play returned to the repertoire between 1917 and 1924 and was performed 109 times, again with Nilson's music. Later on Moissi toured with this role abroad as well. When Moissi toured in the USA in 1928 with the company gathered around him and performing *The Living Corpse*, Nilson was also present. During his career Moissi died in this role more than 1,500 times on stage.⁴³ That was far more often than in the role of *Jedermann*.

Nilson had composed music for Shakespeare's plays *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Henry IV Part II* (and more) when Reinhardt started to direct his Shakespeare cycles in the 1910s. Now he composed music for *Henry IV Part I* and *Macbeth* (1916) as well. In connection with *Macbeth* Nilson describes Reinhardt as a reformer of the 'noises in the theatre' ('Geräusche auf dem Theater'): "The sounds... Either they stand out alone, as in *Macbeth*, where the night of the murder is suggested to our minds by a deep rolling sound

³⁸ Huesmann 1983 717; Nilson

³⁹ Huesmann 1983; 742, 831

⁴⁰ 'kapellmestaren Einar Nilson anförde säkert den Humperdinckska musiken...' *Aftonbladet*, 9 May 1917)

⁴¹ Touring: Huesmann 1983; 631, 2538, 651, 692, 693, 694, 698, 717, 719, 710, 723, 742; Berlin: Huesmann 1983, 742, 831; Sweden: Huesmann 1983; 2506, in Stockholm the conductor was Nilson and not Adolf Wiklund as Huesmann states, see Sweden Kungliga Operan archive; The USA Huesmann 1983

⁴² Huesmann 1983, 648

⁴³ Schaper 2000, p. 106

produced by the organ, intermingled with the ghastly shrieks of the screech-owl. Or else they are combined with other means of expression.’⁴⁴

Nilson conducted his own music at the performances. He conducted also Humperdinck’s music in *The Winter’s Tale*, *The Tempest* and *As You Like It (Was ihr wollt)* and Mendelssohn’s music to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* which was on the schedules from 1913 until 1918.⁴⁵

Nilson joined the ‘Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914’ (‘The German Society 1914’ – actually founded in 1915). This was a very exclusive club headed by the leading military, commercial and social figures of the time. Its members included the generals von Hindenburg and von Moltke, and the industrial magnates Robert Bosch and Gustav Krupp. The first musical members besides Nilson were Richard Strauss and the cellist Heinrich Grünefeld. Writers included Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Thomas Mann and Karl Gustav Vollmoeller – and of course there was Max Reinhardt.⁴⁶ ‘Reinhardt... wanted me there – consequently, I was there... (Not much anti-Semitism around Wilhelmstrasse in those days)’ (Nilson).

In 1915 Nilson renewed his contract with Reinhardt for the coming years.⁴⁷ That year Nilson spent the summer in Austria – near Salzburg, at the Berghof resort in Attersee, in an apartment reserved for composers. Before him Johannes Brahms, Karl Goldmark and Felix von Weingartner had all resided there. During that summer Nilson became acquainted with Arthur Nikisch (1855–1922), conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Nilson became his protégé and spent much time during the last seven years of Nikisch’s life: ‘often as a partner at the poker table, where he relaxed for long and quiet hours with his friends.’ (Nilson)

BALLET PANTOMIMES AND LATE 1910s

Nilson composed music for four ballet pantomimes in 1916–17 in close collaboration with Hugo von Hofmannsthal, who wrote three of them. Max Reinhardt had the idea of establishing a ballet department in his theatre. In Oslo he had seen the young dancer Lillebil Christensen (1899–1989) performing, and he took her to Berlin. Lillebil Christensen moved there with her mother, the dancer and choreographer Gyda Christensen (1872–1969), who also selected dancers from Norway to come to Reinhardt’s theatre. For Lillebil, this talented dancer, new works were created. Hofmannsthal wrote texts for *The Sheperdesses (Die Schäferinnen - Kleines Ballett für Molières Gräfin von Escarbagnas)*, *The Green Flute (Die Grüne Flöte)* and *Prima Ballerina*.

For the short piece *The Sheperdesses* Nilson made an arrangement of music by Rameau. Lillebil Christensen writes in her memoirs about her first performance at the Reinhardt Theatre. She mentions Nilson and also the other Swedish conductor, Gunnar Ahlberg (1886–1943), who worked in Reinhardt’s theatres at that time: ‘So rehearsals started for the small dance play by Hugo von Hofmannsthal *The Sheperdess* [sic] with music by Rameau arranged by conductor Einar Nelson [sic]. He was first conductor, the second was Gunnar Ahlberg [sic] – both Swedes, and it was pleasant for me because at that time I was not very fluent in

⁴⁴ Nilson 1924: Music under Reinhardt: ‘[Diese Geräusche] Sie stehen entweder allein, wie in *Macbeth*, wo uns ein dunkles – von der Orgel ausgehendes – Grollen, in das sich schauerlich der Käuzchenschrei mischt, die Stimmung der Mordnacht nahebringt, oder sie sind mit anderen Darstellungsmitteln verbunden.’ (Nilson 1918: Musik bei Reinhardt)

⁴⁵ Huesmann 1983, 707

⁴⁶ Wikipedia The Deutsche Gesellschaft

⁴⁷ Max Reinhardt’s recommendation letter 4 March 1915, Private archive)

German. Everything felt safer and cosier... After the success of *The Shepherdess* we soon started with Hofmannsthal's next ballet, *The Green Flute*, with music by Mozart arranged again by Nelson.⁴⁸

The following pantomime was *The Green Flute* (*Die grüne Flöte*) for which Einar Nilson arranged music by W.A. Mozart. The première was in April 1916. Leopold Schmidt wrote in *Berliner Tagblatt*: 'Pieces from the early ballet *Les petits riens* alternating with chamber and serenade music was heard and, as finale, the *Alla turca* from the Piano Sonata in A major. One wonders if Mozart was a good choice here because his music does not characterize the Chinese or the wildly grotesque. But it was exceptionally well suited to the lyrical scenes and impressed, as always, through its celestial beauty. At the end the audience applauded enthusiastically: the ballet had without question been to the audience's liking.'⁴⁹

The success was so great that the performances were moved from the Deutsches Theater to the Wintergarten, which was connected to the Hotel Central near Friedrichstraße station, and had considerably more seats.⁵⁰ Nilson arranged music by Jacques Offenbach for Hofmannsthal's new pantomime *Prima Ballerina*, which had its première in Gothenburg, Sweden in May 1917 during Reinhardt's Scandinavian tour. This pantomime too was written for Lillebil Christensen, who danced the title role, Prima Ballerina. Nilson conducted the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra.⁵¹ Following Lillebil Christensen's success, Reinhardt's scene designer Ernst Stern wrote a pantomime for her with the title *Lillebil's Honeymoon Trip* (*Lillebils Hochzeitsreise*) an Egyptian burlesque in seven parts, for which Nilson arranged music by Georges Bizet (1917). The piano version of the music for *The Green Flute* was published in 1917; the score and orchestral parts were published in 1923. The piano version of the music for *Prima Ballerina* was published in 1919.

In the spring of 1918 Nilson conducted the performances of Molière's *Le Bougeois gentilhomme* (*Der Bürger als Edelmann*) to the music of Richard Strauss. That production was really a collection of 'who's who' around Reinhardt, as it involved many figures central to Reinhardt's art such as Hofmannsthal, Moissi and Helene Thimig.⁵²

The following year 1919 saw the opening of the Grosses Schauspielhaus in Berlin, which had more than 3,000 seats. The opening performance was *Oresteia* by Aeschylus with Nilson's music, which he also conducted. This performance shows Einar Nilson's position and importance in Reinhardt's theatres. After that he conducted Humperdinck's music to *The Merchant of Venice* and Mendelssohn's music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* there as well as his own music to *Danton's Death* by Büchner. In the 1920s Nilson, as chief conductor and head of the music department of Reinhardt's theatres, had at his disposal a

⁴⁸ 'Så begynte provene på et lite dansespill av Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Die Schäferin* [sic], med musikk av Rameau, tilrettelagt av kapellmester Einar Nelson [sic]. Han var forste-kapellmester, annen-kapellmester var Gunnar Arlberg – de var begge svenske, og det var hyggelig for meg som ennå ikke var saerlig flink i tysk. Alt ble mer trygt og hjemlig på den måten. [...] Etter suksessen med *Die Schäferin* gikk vi straks igang med Hofmannsthals neste ballett *Die grüne Flöte* til Mozarts musikk. Igjen i Nelsons arrangement.' (Ibsen 1961, p. 62–64.)

⁴⁹ 'Man hörte Stücke aus dem Jugendballett *Les petits riens*, dazwischen erklang Kammer- und Serenadenmusik und als Finale *Alla turca* der A-dur-Klaversonate. Ob gerade Mozart hier am Platze war, darf zweifelhaft erscheinen, denn seine Musik charakterisiert weder das Chinesische noch das Wild-Groteske. Sie schmiegte sich aber vortrefflich den lyrischen Szenen an und wirkte wie immer durch ihre himmlische Schönheit. Am Schluss erhob sich anhaltender Beifall: das Ballett hatte fraglos sehr gefallen.' (Fiedler 1972b p. 47, cit. Leopold Schmidt, *Berliner Tagblatt* 17 April 1916)

⁵⁰ see about *The Green Flute*, Fiedler 1972a

⁵¹ Muhr 1973, p. 149

⁵² Hofmannsthal had made an adaptation of the play, the sets by Ernst Stern and the performers included Alexander Moissi, Max Pallenberg, Else Heims-Reinhardt (Reinhardt's wife), Helene Thimig (Reinhardt's future wife) and Hermann Thimig. The choreography was again by the Norwegian Gyda Christensen; her daughter Lillebil danced with Ernst Matray.

musical apparatus that was enormous. It included 150 musicians, nine assistant conductors and 120 singers in the choir.⁵³

SWEDEN: ALSO CASTING AND DIRECTING

It is obvious that Nilson was a central figure when Reinhardt and his theatre company visited Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries. Nilson was always in the picture – organizing, interpreting and performing. During World War I these tours were sponsored by the German government, who wanted to promote German culture.⁵⁴ The actors were happy to visit to Sweden, as they could fill their stomachs with ample quantities of good food, including meat and butter, instead of the meagre wartime diet in Germany.^{55 56}

Reinhardt directed several plays by the Swedish writer August Strindberg (1849–1912) and Nilson composed music for some of these productions, including *The Ghost Sonata*. With local Swedish actors Reinhardt also directed Strindberg's *A Dream Play* at the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm in 1921⁵⁷ and for this production Nilson travelled to Sweden to make preparations and, on behalf of Reinhardt, handled the casting of the Swedish actors.⁵⁸ It is significant that Reinhardt even entrusted the casting to Nilson. When Reinhardt directed Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* with local artists in Copenhagen (1921) and Stockholm (1922) Nilson was present. He travelled to Stockholm in advance to prepare the music and even Reinhardt's direction.^{59 60}

NILSON AND SALZBURG

Nilson was a key figure at the Salzburg Festival during its early years. There are different stories about how Max Reinhardt had the idea of performing *Jedermann* in front of Salzburg Cathedral. According to some accounts either Hermann Bahr, Erwin Kerber or Bernhard Paumgartner were present at the moment of

⁵³ Newspaper clipping, Private archive

⁵⁴ Raphael-Linden 1960 p. 187

⁵⁵ Winterstein 1982, p. 343–344

⁵⁶ When Reinhardt toured around Europe with his *Oedipus* production in 1911, visiting Rīga, St Petersburg and Stockholm, Nilson travelled to Stockholm in advance to negotiate the use of the circus arena of Circus Orlando in Djurgården and arrange customs and transportation formalities. (Muhr 1973 p. 139–140; Nilson) After that Reinhardt, performed with his actors in Sweden on three subsequent occasions: in 1915, 1917 and 1920, and later on his own. (see about these performances in Sweden: Muhr 1973 p. 134–168). In 1915 Nilson conducted the Royal Swedish Orchestra in Mendelssohn's music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. (Poster: 13 November 1915; 15 November 1915 Kungliga Operan Archive). Two years later he conducted – again in the Royal Opera House – Humperdinck's music to the *The Miracle* with Lillebil Christensen in the main role. (*Aftonbladet* 9 May 1917). During that tour Hofmannsthal's *Prima Ballerina* had its première in Gothenburg. In 1920 Einar Nilson was again on tour with Reinhardt's troupe in Sweden and Scandinavia.

⁵⁷ Muhr 1973, p. 152–154

⁵⁸ Newspaper clipping, Private archive

⁵⁹ Muhr 1973, p. 156

⁶⁰ Reinhardt started to direct Strindberg's plays after he and Nilson had called at Strindberg's house in Stockholm in 1911. Strindberg was ill, however, and unable to receive visitors. (Nilson). Gottfried Reinhardt tells a slightly different story about this (G. Reinhardt 1973, p. 81–83). The Swedish production of Offenbach was extremely popular and received 104 performances. When it returned to the repertoire of the Royal Opera in 1931, Nilson travelled to Stockholm as usual to prepare the rehearsals; the production received several performances. (Kungliga Operan Archive)

inspiration.⁶¹ Sometimes the accounts mention Hofmannsthal and Bahr together with Reinhardt⁶² or Nilson.⁶³ Einar Nilson tells the story like this: after dinner one evening he was walking with Reinhardt from the Österreichischer Hof (today Hotel Sacher) to the latter's home Leopoldskron, which he had just acquired. During that walk Reinhardt developed the idea of an outdoor performance of *Jedermann* in Salzburg. Nilson said he knew a local dignitary, Hofrat Friedrich Gehmacher, who had good connections to the archbishop, who then gave permission to perform in front of the Cathedral. Gehmacher himself persuaded four local businessmen to act as sponsors. (Nilson)

Jedermann was performed on 22 August 1920. The main role was played by Alexander Moissi, who had played it and died in the role on stage many times earlier. The score was by Einar Nilson with additional music by the Salzburgian Bernhard Paumgartner (1887–1971), director of the Mozarteum, who also conducted it. *Jedermann* was performed again the following year, this time with only Nilson's music and Nilson conducting. In 1922 Hofmannsthal's adaptation of the Spanish writer Pedro Calderón's play *The Great Theatre of the World – Das Salzburger Grosse Welttheater* – was performed in the Kollegienkirche with Nilson's music conducted by the composer. Hofmannsthal wrote to Nilson when he was working on it :

'It has, however, grown into something big; it will perhaps be half an hour longer than *Jedermann*. It will then be very clear to you what musical pieces you should get from collections of old tunes. In addition to the fanfares there will only be three or four, but very important numbers will be required, among them the chorus of the ascending souls and a short symphony as an overture before "the play in a play".'⁶⁴

In the press there was news about the *The Great Theatre of the World*: "A Symphony of the World", composed by the Swedish composer Einar Nilson... will accompany the acting from the organ balcony of the church.'⁶⁵

Nilson used music derived from Handel's oratorios, and the music surrounded the audience in the church in an ethereal way. Reinhardt himself gave instructions where the music should be played in the context of Hofmannsthal's text.⁶⁶ The play had its première on 13 August 1922 and it was performed daily for twelve days. There were also two extra performances for the locals. The performances took three hours without intermission. Especially effective were the *Dance of Death (Totentanz)* section of the performance and Alexander Moissi in the role of the Beggar.⁶⁷ There were plans to take the play to the USA. Hofmannsthal wrote to Nilson and gave instructions about the music⁶⁸. In the end, however, it was not *The Great Theatre of the World* that was taken to the USA but rather *The Miracle*.

During the summer of 1923 preparations were made to perform *The Miracle* in the USA. Lady Diana Manners (Cooper), who played the part of Madonna, describes in her autobiography how she arrived in Salzburg and was told how things stood:

⁶¹ Furich-Prossnitz 1990, p. 20; Furich-Leisler-Prossnitz 1973, p. 133; Paumgartner 1969, p. 118–119

⁶² Zuckerkandl 2013/1981 p. 166–168

⁶³ Müry 2014 /2001, p. 29

⁶⁴ '...dabei ist es ein grosses Ding geworden, wird wohl im Ganzen um eine halbe Stunde länger spielen als der *Jedermann*. Was an Musikstücken dann aus alten Fundgruben herbeizuschaffen sein wird, wird sich Ihnen ganz deutlich zeigen. Es sind nebst den Fanfaren nur etwa drei bis vier, aber recht bedeutende Nummer nötig, worunter der Chor der aufziehenden Seelen und die kurze Symphonie als Ouverture vor dem "Spiel im Spiel".' (Hugo von Hofmannsthal to Nilson, 2 November 1921, Private Archive. See also Hofmannsthal 1977, p. 199)

⁶⁵ 'Eine "Weltsinfonie", komponiert von dem schwedischen Tonkünstler Einar Nilson, [...] wird vom Orgelchor der Kirche herab die Handlung begleiten, [...]') (Linzer Tages-Post 10/16 July 1922)

⁶⁶ Walk 1980, p. 85

⁶⁷ Furich-Prossnitz 1990, p. 37–38

⁶⁸ Hugo von Hofmannsthal, 7 April 1923 to Nilson, Private archive. See also Hofmannsthal 1977, p. 216

‘That we must wait in Salzburg for the arrival of Einar Nilson, the arranger of Humperdinck’s *Miracle* music, that he was expected daily, and that nothing in the nature of rehearsal could be started without him... At long last Nilson arrived and the fateful hour struck when I must be tried out by Reinhardt... Nilson then went to the piano and played the themes, while my motifs and movements were directed by Reinhardt. The statue must wake from stone, turn to flesh, and the living Virgin must break from her cerements, descend from her niche, lay down her jewelled crown and gather up in all humility the veil, scapula and cord of the fugitive Nun.’⁶⁹

After Humperdinck’s death, Nilson’s importance as Reinhardt’s musical advisor became even more significant.⁷⁰ For the American performances new music was needed. Reinhardt, Nilson and Friedrich Schirmer (who as Humperdinck’s pupil shared responsibility for the music with Nilson) visited ceremonies at Nonnberg Monastery in Salzburg and wrote down the often repeated chants which were then used in *The Miracle*. (Nilson) Only Molière’s *The Imaginary Invalid* was performed at the Festival, first in Reinhardt’s home in Leopoldskron and later at the Salzburg Landestheater. For this play Nilson again composed music in the style of Lully. This saved the Festival in 1923. For the following summer there were supposed to be performances of *The Miracle*, which had enjoyed great success in New York. It was, however, cancelled in early August and there was no festival in Salzburg that summer.⁷¹

The Miracle was performed the next summer, 1925. *Das Salzburger Grosse Welttheater* was also performed at the Festival with Nilson’s music, conducted by Paumgartner. Nilson attended the Festival but did not conduct. That summer Nilson, Hofmannsthal, Reinhardt, Richard Strauss and Ernst Matray were the founding members of the International Pantomime Society (Internationale Pantomimen-Gesellschaft). During the Festival it organized performances of *The Green Flute* (conducted by Oskar Fried) and after that the production toured. The Pantomime Society did not turn out to be successful, however, and it was wound up the following year.⁷²

In the summer of 1926 Nilson again resided in Salzburg. *Jedermann* was performed, with his music. The local Joseph Messner (1893–1969), who had just been appointed *Domkapellmeister*, wrote additional music and conducted the performances. That summer Nilson conducted Paumgartner’s music for Reinhardt’s production of Carlo Gozzi’s *Turandot*. In 1927 Nilson conducted the Vienna Philharmonic (Wiener Philharmoniker) and the Female Choir of Vienna Opera (Damenchor der Staatsoper Wien) in performances of *A Midsummer’s Night’s Dream*.⁷³

During the following years, 1928–31, Nilson conducted only his own *Jedermann* music at the Salzburg Festival. After that, Nilson’s music was conducted by Paumgartner (without additional music) until 1937. From 1946 onwards *Jedermann* was performed again in Salzburg every year – with Nilson’s music in 1946–59, 1963–68 and 1973–82. A short passage from his music was included in the 2013–16 performances.

THE MIRACLE AND OTHER ACTIVITIES IN THE USA

Nilson travelled to the United States for the first time in late 1923. He was responsible for the music in Reinhardt’s production of *The Miracle* in New York’s Century Theatre which was a giant production. It was

⁶⁹ Cooper 1988/1958, p. 242–244

⁷⁰ Newspaper clipping, Private archive

⁷¹ Furich-Prossnitz 1990, p. 47–49

⁷² Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s letter to Nilson, 25 January 1926, Private archive; Fiedler 1972a, p. 118, 141, see also about *The Green Flute* in Hofmannsthal 2006b, pp. 585–587

⁷³ Before that, Nilson had conducted performances of *The Miracle* around Europe. In Vienna he had conducted the Vienna Symphony Orchestra (Wiener Sinfonie-Orchester) and the Philharmonic Choir (Philharmonischer Chor)

produced by Morris Gest and the stage design was by Norman Bel Geddes. Both of them had visited Salzburg during the summer while planning the production. Norman Bel Geddes designed a church inside the theatre. Even the preparations for *The Miracle* were vast. Reinhardt's production was rehearsed 'for seven weeks with the help of twenty-two assistants, and the last two weeks he directed them from a scaffold set up in the middle of the auditorium. Aides stood beside him with megaphones and others were stationed about the house.'^{74 75}

Nilson's musical apparatus consisted of a symphony orchestra and a chorus of 120 members. For this production of *The Miracle* Nilson was responsible for assembling the choir from local singers. He himself writes: 'For three days and most of the nights, I had auditioned about seven hundred singers and selected one hundred and twenty to fill the fixed number of jobs, provided for in the budget.' Nilson did not wait for things to happen: to make room for the chorus he demolished a scenery wall with a hammer and a few kicks. (Nilson) In 1924 there were nearly 300 performances in New York. There were plans to take the production to Salzburg that summer, but it was postponed to the following year.

During the years 1924–30 Nilson travelled with the play around the USA. From New York the tour continued to Cleveland, Cincinnati, Boston, St Louis, Chicago, Philadelphia, Kansas City, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Detroit, Milwaukee, St Paul and Dallas.⁷⁶ During these years *The Miracle* was performed more than 700 times in the USA.⁷⁷ Nilson did not conduct all of these performances, however, as he was responsible for the preparations. After conducting the first week of the performance, Nilson would travel to the next city to assemble the choir by auditions and to prepare the orchestra. Nilson had three assistant conductors who would take over while Nilson was rehearsing in the next city⁷⁸. Nilson received good reviews. In Cincinnati he conducted the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra 'splendidly'.⁷⁹ In Kansas City there were ninety singers in the choir, chosen by Nilson, and the Kansas City Little Symphony had been augmented to fifty members: 'Mr Nilson, in an incredibly short time, has achieved remarkably fine results.'⁸⁰

Nilson was working in the USA on other productions as well as *The Miracle*. He conducted orchestras such as the Cleveland Orchestra.⁸¹ At the turn of the year 1927–28 Reinhardt made a guest appearance in New York with his players from Berlin and Vienna. The programme included performances with Nilson's music of *Jedermann*, *The Living Corpse* and *Danton's Death*. In 1928–29 Nilson took part in a tour organized for Alexander Moissi as the main star. (Nilson) The repertoire included Tolstoy's *The Living Corpse* with Nilson's music (and Henrik Ibsen's *Ghosts*). The tour visited seven large American cities.⁸²

In 1929, after the Moissi tour, Nilson was enlisted as conductor in the Morris Gest production of the Freiburg Passion Play in the Hippodrome in New York. 'Gest's mega production was conceived with a lavish

⁷⁴ Styan 2008 (1982), p. 127

⁷⁵ There were 3,000 costumes made by 100 seamstresses, two tons of stage snow; the cathedral inside the theatre was 200 feet long, 120 feet wide and 110 feet high... 'The theatre has been literally turned into a cathedral, not a mere contrivance of canvas and paint. The effect was completed by the sounds of sacred music as the audience came in, and ushers in nun's wimples showed them to their pews in a dim religious light.' (Styan 1982 (2008), pp. 100–101)

⁷⁶ Huesmann 1983, 2580–2584, 2586–2590, 2602–2606

⁷⁷ Huesmann 1983; see *ibid*

⁷⁸ Newspaper clipping, Private archive

⁷⁹ newspaper clipping, Private archive

⁸⁰ newspaper clipping, Private archive

⁸¹ newspaper clipping, Private archive

⁸² Schaper 2000, p. 196

hand. In addition to the original German-speaking cast, he hired 1,000 extras, an orchestra with 100 musicians, including an organist and a prestigious Russian Royal Choir.^{83 84}

After the tour with *The Miracle* had ended, Nilson remained in the USA in the beginning of 1930. With Reinhardt he was preparing a plan for a cultural programme to be performed during the coming Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 1932. The performances would be in the Hollywood Bowl and would include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Green Flute*.⁸⁵ However, these plans fell through.

BACK IN EUROPE AND LEAVING GERMANY

Einar Nilson returned to Europe and took up his position again as the chief of the music department at Reinhardt's theatres in Berlin. In 1931 Nilson took care of two of Reinhardt's Offenbach productions: *Orpheus in the Underworld* in Stockholm and *The Tales of Hoffmann* (*Hoffmanns Erzählungen*) in Berlin (Großes Schauspielhaus). The latter was again a vast production. The première was in November with 175 performances and 3,000 spectators on each occasion.⁸⁶ Nilson was again responsible for organizing the music and he had access to the best opera singers of the time. Nilson explained about the singers in the part of Hoffmann: 'Practically all the leading German tenors. We gave seven performances a week and a Sunday matinée. No Hoffmann wanted to sing more than two or three performances a week, so Luft Hansa was very busy bringing in Hoffmanns from all corners of Germany and taking them home again. I do not think this opera has ever been presented as magnificently, hardly even musically, and definitely not in respect to acting or as the great show Offenbach certainly meant it to be.' (Nilson)

In 1932 Nilson was to conduct performances of *The Miracle* for the last time. These were in London, where Reinhardt directed the production with English performers. Lady Diana Manners again played the part of the Madonna. After the first night, Reinhardt left London but Nilson stayed and conducted: there were 135 performances at the Lyceum Theatre during the period April–July 1932. Humperdinck's music was complemented by additional passages by Anton Rubinstein, Friedrich Schirmer and Einar Nilson.⁸⁷ A 78rpm recording of a selection of this music exists where Nilson conducts the London Symphony Orchestra with organ and chorus.⁸⁸

In March 1933 Nilson conducted the music in the performances of *The Great Theatre of the World* at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin. Soon after this Reinhardt left Germany to rehearse *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Florence with Italian actors, and he never went back. Nilson stayed at Reinhardt's theatre in Berlin but he had to leave the country soon for Salzburg. As he had Jews working in his music department at the theatre he was advised to sack them all, but he refused. (Nilson) He left very quickly and had to leave his Bechstein grand piano and some other belongings behind in Berlin. (Gösta Nilson) He had now no permanent position, but worked with Reinhardt who had moved to Salzburg as well. In the autumn of 1933 Nilson was with Reinhardt in Paris who rehearsed *Die Fledermaus* there with French actors and singers.

⁸³ Nahshon 2012 p. 88, See about the production Nahshon 2012 pp. 59–100

⁸⁴ This production was performed 48 times in the spring of 1929 (IBDB Internet Broadway Database). The performances annoyed the local Jewish community, which tried to have the performances forbidden. (Nahshon 2012 pp. 87–88) Nilson himself explains: 'We made a beautiful performance out of it in the old Hippodrome. We had a large symphony orchestra, the famous Russian Slavenskaya Choir, played Bach, Händel, Mozart and great choral excerpts from Liszt's *Elisabeth* and *Christus*, and had beautiful scenery. Nothing helped. Neither press nor public would have any part of it.' (Nilson)

⁸⁵ Nilson Memorandum, Private archive

⁸⁶ See more about the production in Senelick 2017 p. 211–215

⁸⁷ J.P. Wearing 2014b, p. 198–199

⁸⁸ The Gramophone Co. Ltd. Hayes, Middlesex, England. His Master's Voice

Nilson was also engaged for a short time as manager of the society (*Gastspiele Wiener Schauspieler unter der Leitung von Max Reinhardt*) which was founded within Reinhardt's Josefstadt Theater (Theater in der Josefstadt) in Vienna with the purpose of touring. The programme included Schiller's *Maria Stuart* with Helene Thimig and Eleonora von Mendelssohn in the main roles.⁸⁹ Nilson had already travelled with Reinhardt's productions to almost all European countries and the United States, and he would soon head there again.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM AND EVERYMAN IN CALIFORNIA AND TOURS IN THE USA

In the summer of 1934 Einar Nilson and Reinhardt's assistant director Felix Weissenberg travelled to the USA to make the necessary preparations for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the California Festival⁹⁰ to which Max Reinhardt had received an invitation. While making the preparations, Nilson picked the then unknown Olivia de Havilland and young Mickey Rooney to be approved by Reinhardt. (Nilson) Once again it was a giant production; Hollywood Bowl was the venue, and Nilson conducted Mendelssohn's music with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.⁹¹ After Hollywood, the production toured with Nilson to San Francisco, Berkeley, Chicago, Milwaukee and St Louis until the beginning of 1935.⁹²

Reinhardt stayed in Hollywood and started to prepare for the next year's festival in California. He also visited Yosemite National Park, from where he wrote a long letter to Nilson explaining his plans for the *Midsummer Night's Dream* performance there: 'It would be very special (for the world), like *Jedermann* in Salzburg... Also in Salzburg we thought at first that *Jedermann* was only a first passing enterprise.'⁹³

However, these plans fell through. After all these performances Nilson tried to find work. Life was not easy in the USA at the time of the Depression. (Gösta Nilson) Nilson conducted the Standard Symphony Orchestra, which was financed by the Standard Oil Company, in a few radio performances in late 1935.⁹⁴ In 1936, however, he conducted *Everyman* at the Hollywood Bowl and expanded his score for this purpose. The performances were directed by the Dane Johannes Poulsen (1881–1938) who had directed the play at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen as early as 1914 with Nilson's music – performances that had continued until 1923. He had also directed *The Living Corpse* with Nilson's music.⁹⁵

It has been said that Nilson saved his own skin by organizing these performances with the California Festival, as the arrangers were not willing to work with Reinhardt.⁹⁶ For his movie of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1935) Reinhardt had chosen Erich Korngold as the arranger and conductor. Korngold signed a six-month contract with Warner Brothers to do this – and of course, he earned a good salary,⁹⁷ money that Nilson would have welcomed. The situation was very disappointing for him as he was very familiar with the music, having conducted it hundreds of times. Poulsen writes in his memoirs about the *Everyman* performance:

⁸⁹ Blubacher 2008 pp. 205–220

⁹⁰ Nilson; G. Reinhardt 1973, pp. 264–265

⁹¹ *A Midsummer Night's Dream* programme leaflet, Private archive

⁹² Huesmann 1983

⁹³ 'Es würde eine Spezialität werden (für die Welt), wie der Salzburger *Jedermann*. [...] Auch in Salzburg haben wir zuerst geglaubt, der *Jedermann* sei nur ein erster, vorübergehender Versuch'. (Max Reinhardt to Einar Nilson 18 October 1934, Private archive. See also the letter in Reinhardt 1989, p. 283-287)

⁹⁴ Newspaper clipping, Private archive

⁹⁵ Leicht-Hallar 1977; Jacobsen 1990

⁹⁶ Huesmann 1983, p. 78

⁹⁷ Delmas 2017, pp. 259–260

‘Finally we could start playing for the around 20,000 spectators – a vast, undulating sea of people... Now five enormous church bells started to ring. This detail was in itself a sensation in Hollywood because here you never hear a church bell. And now the composer Einar Nilsson’s [sic] lovely heavenly chorus commenced... You could see the Virgin Mary on her heavenly throne with her crown on, surrounded by 80 Angels and Saints and the four Evangelists – almost like in Fra Angelicos painting of Paradise.’⁹⁸

Nilson conducted his music with the Festival Orchestra, which consisted of players from the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and he was also responsible for the casting.⁹⁹ For the Hollywood Bowl production, new music and dance scenes were needed. Poulsen’s wife Ulla (1905–2001) who had been prima ballerina at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, made the choreography for these dances. The set designer was the famous Danish painter and stage designer Kay Nielsen (1886–1957) from the same theatre. He stayed in the USA and later worked for Walt Disney Productions (including *Fantasia* in 1940). These *Everyman* performances involved many Scandinavians. They were even able to rehearse in Charlie Chaplin’s (1889–1977) studios because his wife Paulette Goddard was Danish.¹⁰⁰

FAUST, WARNER BROTHERS AND LAST YEARS

In 1938 Nilson worked again with Reinhardt at the California Festival in Goethe’s *Faust, Part I*. He was responsible for the choir at the Los Angeles Pilgrimage Outdoor Theatre. Later, when the production toured to San Francisco, Nilson was a directing assistant. Nilson and Reinhardt were in contact after 1938, though obviously they did not work together. In 1941 Nilson finally secured employment in the music department of Warner Brothers, when he was sixty years old. (Gösta Nilson)¹⁰¹

In 1936, before working at Warner Brothers, Nilson had been already in contact with the film industry, when he wrote a script about the life of the Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen. Nilson sold the script to Samuel Goldwyn. Later this was made into a film by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Productions (1952), but nothing of Nilson’s original script was left and it was credited to others. (Nilson) The film was a great success, with Danny Kaye in the main role. In 1946 Nilson appeared in the film *Deception* with Bette Davis as leading actress. He coached the actor Claude Rains (1889–1967) in how to conduct an orchestra, which he needed to do for his role as the composer Hollein. (Gösta Nilson) Nilson has a cameo role in the film (in film catalogues he is credited as Einar Neilsen!) substituting for the composer-conductor Hollein and conducting the orchestra in the scene where Hollein’s Cello Concerto is performed. The music was composed by Erich Korngold.

In the 1950s life started to be easier for Nilson, and he began to write his autobiography. (Gösta Nilson) In 1960 Nilson retired from Warner Brothers and that was the year he visited the Salzburg Festival for the last time. Nilson passed away on 20 April 1964 at his home in Hollywood. The *New York Times* announced his death with the headline: ‘Einar Nilson, 83, Conductor, Associate of Max Reinhardt.’¹⁰²

⁹⁸ ‘Endelig kunde vi begynde for de ca. 20 000 Tilskuere – et enormt, bolgende Menneskehav [...] Nu bygdynte 5 mægtige Kirkeklokker at ringe. Alene dette er en Sensation i Hollywood; thi her hører man aldrig en Kirkeklokke. Og nu faldt Komponisten Einar Nilssons [sic] dejlige himmelske Kor ind, [...] man ser Jomfru Maria paa sin Himmel-Trone med Jomfru-Kronen paa, omgivet af ne skare af 80 Engle og Helgener og de 4 Evangelister – ganske som paa Fra Angelicos Paradis Billende.’ (Poulsen 1946, p. 61)

⁹⁹ *Everyman* programme leaflet. Private archive

¹⁰⁰ Poulsen 1946, pp. 51–52

¹⁰¹ That year Reinhardt sent Nilson a telegram in which he congratulated Nilson on his birthday. (telegram Max Reinhardt to Einar Nilson, Private archive) Similarly Nilson’s name appears in the list of people who congratulated Reinhardt on his 70th Birthday on 9 September 1943. Some weeks after that Reinhardt died in New York.

¹⁰² *New York Times* 22 April 1964

PRIVATE LIFE

In 1914 Nilson married Hedwig (Hede) Eleonore Vetter von Sonneberg (1889–1977) from Altona, Hamburg. She was Jewish on her Warsawian mother's side and was an actress at Reinhardt's theatre in Berlin. She had been married to a Scandinavian musician before Nilson and appeared with the name Hedwig Jacobsen in Reinhardt's theatre production of *Faust I* in 1914. Nilson had also been married before, for a short time, to Madeline Ashton-Wolff. Hedwig had converted to Christianity and their son Nils Christian was born in Berlin in the summer of 1918. Hedwig Nilson was an integral part of the Salzburg Festival during its early years. She made the choreography for the first *Jedermann* performances in 1920–21 and also later, for several years until 1937. She also played the part of Sacristanin in *The Miracle* at the Salzburg Festival in 1925. While in the USA in 1920s, at the time of the performances of *The Miracle*, Nilson lived with his wife and son in New York, in the Swedish colony on Long Island.

The Nilsons divorced in September 1926 and Hedwig got married again as early as December to the artist Franz von Schaffgotsch (1902–42) from Salzburg, a painter 13 years her junior. After the divorce their son Nils lived with his mother and Franz von Schaffgotsch in Salzburg. In 1938 Hedwig and Franz left Austria for a warmer climate, to take care of Hedwig's health. During that time came the Anschluss and they decided not to return. Franz died in 1942 Dubrovnik, where he was interned. Hedwig was able to survive by using a false identity. Her son Nils, who had left Austria soon after the Anschluss, went to Sweden and later to the USA and became a soldier. After the war he tried to locate his mother around Europe and finally found her in Italy. Hedwig von Schaffgotsch wrote a moving autobiographical novel about these years. (von Schaffgotsch 1949). Nils (1918–88) made a career as film producer in Bavaria, Germany. In 1950 he married Alexandra Moscalenco (1929–2017), the granddaughter of Alexander Moissi. They had three children: Philipp (b. 1950), Claudia (b. 1952) and Florian (b. 1962).

In 1930 Nilson married the singer Travis Thames (1899–1966) in the home of the actor Rudolf Schildkraut in Hollywood (Gösta Nilson) whom he knew from the time when Schildkraut played in Reinhardt's theatres. Nilson had met Travis Thames during the auditions for the choir for *The Miracle*. (Nilson) She too had been married before. Travis Thames was born in Louisville, Kentucky. Her father was a baptist minister. (Gösta Nilson) She started singing in the choir of *The Miracle* but soon gained roles as a soprano soloist. Besides singing in *The Miracle* in the USA, Travis Thames performed with Nilson on tours in Europe in 1927 in *Jedermann* and *The Miracle*. She also appeared in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Salzburg that year.

Their son Gösta was born in Berlin in 1931 after Nilson had returned to Europe and resumed his position in Berlin. When they returned to the USA in 1934, Travis Thames worked for an American company making dresses in the traditional Austrian style. She was in charge of costumes for Reinhardt's modern version of *Jedermann*, this time the music was by Max Pons¹⁰³ at the Max Reinhardt workshop in Hollywood in 1940.

The Nilsons were in contact with old friends from Europe who now resided in the USA, such as Heinz Herald who was one of Reinhardt's associates and who worked now as screen writer. Reinhardt's first wife Else Heims-Reinhardt (1878–1958) was also a close friend, as was Rudolf Schildkraut's son, the actor Joseph Schildkraut (1896–1964). Nilson was in contact with the composer Heinz Roemheld, who had German roots, had studied music in Berlin and was also working for Warner Brothers. He was also a close friend of Rudolf Amond, who had earlier been one of Reinhardt's actors and now played Nazi parts in Hollywood films. (Gösta Nilson) Travis Thames passed away in 1966, two years after her husband. Gösta Nilson made his career as an airline pilot in the USA. He married with Mary Nelson (b. 1942) in 1966. They have two children, Christian (b. 1969) and Siri (b. 1970).

¹⁰³ Huesmann 1983, 2724

REINHARDT'S COMPOSER

After its 1911 Berlin première, Nilson's music for *Jedermann* was performed in many cities in Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire in tours by Reinhardt's theatre company. His music was also used by other directors, for example in Dresden in 1912 and 1924. When the play was performed at the Vienna Burgtheater in 1913, Hofmannsthal wrote to Richard Strauss: '*Jedermann* will be performed this evening at the Burgtheater. Yesterday at the dress rehearsal most people had tears in their eyes. And now it is played on 90 German stages.'¹⁰⁴



Nilson with Max Reinhardt in Reinhardt's home Leopoldskron in the 1920s

Jedermann was performed with Nilson's music in Sweden on tours as early as 1913, in Copenhagen in 1914–38 (97 times) and even in Helsinki in 1916. His music was also performed at the Garrick Theatre in London in 1923, with Sir Martin Harvey playing the main part. The adaptation of Hofmannsthal's play was entitled *Via Crucis*.¹⁰⁵ After World War II Nilson's *Jedermann* was performed at the Burgtheater in Vienna in 1945. This was the first performance after the opening of the theatre after the war. During the following ten years the play received 130 performances.¹⁰⁶ *Das Salzburger Grosse Welttheater* was very popular not only in Salzburg but also at the Burgtheater in Vienna in the 1930s before the Anschluss, with almost fifty performances. These were directed by Raoul Aslan and used Nilson's music.

The music for *The Green Flute* has been performed from 1916 onwards. By the 1920s it had been played in more than 40 different cities, and contracts were planned for France, England, Spain and Italy.¹⁰⁷ In Vienna it was performed at the Josefstadt Theater in 1936 and at the Volksoper in 1943 together with music by Antonín Dvořák and Josef Lenner. Heinrich Damisch, who had been active in establishing the Salzburg Festival, wrote positively about the performance on 5 March 1943 in the *Wiener Kronen-Zeitung*. Also the

¹⁰⁴ 'Der *Jedermann* ist heute abend im Burgtheater. Gestern auf der Generalprobe hatten die meisten Leute Tränen in den Augen. So geht es nun auf 90 deutschen Bühnen.' (Hofmannsthal to Richard Strauss 19 December 1913 in Strauss-Hofmannsthal 1978, p. 253. See also Hofmannsthal 1990, p. 275)

¹⁰⁵ J.P. Wearing 2014, pp. 211–212

¹⁰⁶ Burgtheater 1976

¹⁰⁷ Hofmannsthal 2006, p. 627 cit. Hedwig Nilson to Emil Hertzka 2 March 1926

Völkischer Beobachter, the main organ for the Nazi party, wrote about Nilson's music: 'The Mozartian pieces, which Einar Nilson... had combined with undeniable skill'.¹⁰⁸

Later performances took place in the GDR, at the Leipzig Theatre in 1955–56. Since Lillebil Christensen's time in Reinhardt's theatre, Nilson's arrangement of Offenbach's music for *Prima Ballerina* has been performed at the Royal Opera in Stockholm in 1935–39, in Gävle in 1936 and also in Gothenburg in 1939 – the city where it had been premièred in 1917.

The Living Corpse was performed hundreds of times and later, with Nilson's music, at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen (1916–25; in some performances with Moissi as guest performer in the role of Fedja). Nilson was part of the tour group that was gathered around Alexander Moissi in the USA in 1928 with this play, and his music was played at these performances. *Oedipus* with Nilson's music was performed at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in London in 1936. It was a revival of Reinhardt's earlier production there from 1912, again with Martin Harvey in the main role. William H. Hudson, who conducted the 16 performances, wrote additional music.¹⁰⁹

Nilson was a master of composing original music at short notice, music in the style of other composers or arranging pieces for Reinhardt's productions, depending on the play. In the unpublished manuscript of his autobiography, Nilson reveals the process for writing the music for Reinhardt's productions; he writes about rehearsals and Reinhardt's Production Books (*Regiebücher*). Since this is written by someone who has been a close associate of Reinhardt in musical matters, it is an important description:

'When Reinhardt had a preliminary conference with a composer and tried to explain, in words and gestures, what music he wanted, he was always a little embarrassed. He knew that music was confined within bars and traditional forms and even to mathematical formulas. He also knew that music was the only important element of his productions where he could not trust himself entirely and therefore, as a rule, left the final decision to his musical adviser – be it in the choice of a composer for a play or of a performer. There really was no reason for embarrassment because his suggestions were always very clear and certainly an inspiration to the composer. They often resulted in the composer being better than usual... Reinhardt was always curious and a little excited the first time he heard the music he had ordered. He would stand leaning against the piano close to the pianist [composer] and listen. It did not take him long to find out how to put the music to use in the play. He was quite certain which part of the music could be repeated and heard again – also what he wanted cut out. Then, when the time came for the first rehearsal with the orchestra, his first remark was: "It all sounds different", and the second was "Too long and too loud". Always the same. When the music was really good he sensed it immediately and left it alone. If any compromises had to be made he always found a way to make room for the music.' (Nilson)

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¹⁰⁸ 'Die Mozartischen Stücke, die Einar Nilson [...] mit unleugbarem Geschick zusammengestellt hat [...] (*Völkischer Beobachter*, Wiener Ausgabe 5 March 1943. Balettabend in Opernhaus der Stadt Wien)

¹⁰⁹ J.P. Wearing 2014b, p. 549

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Kungliga Operan, Stockholm

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Lunds Universitet, Arkivcentrum Syd

Musikverket, Musik- och teaterbiblioteket, Stockholm

Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin, Landesmuseum für Kultur und Geschichte Berlins

Svenska Teatern i Helsingfors, Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland

Sächsisches Landesbibliothek, Dresden

Sächsische Staatstheater, Archiv, Dresden

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Universität der Künste Archiv, Berlin

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Österreichische Nationalbibliothek

Claudia von Auersperg, private archive

Gösta Nilson, private archive

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Claudia von Auersperg (2018-2019), Gösta Nilson (2018-2019), Siri Anderson (2018-2019,) Friedrich Gehmacher (2018), Leonard M. Fiedler (2019).

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