

“relationship” has direction in two ways. For a music historiography that puts musical life in focus, questions about relationships between musicians, institutions, and the public will be of central interest. The spread of music and the movement of musicians become central. To view relationships and movement as central to the development of the musical life, the perspective needs to be lifted up over the national music horizon. Instead of the traditional national music history, one can look at larger regions as kind of “common marketplaces”, in which composers, musicians and singers move between places both within a country and across national borders.

Final remarks

Writing music history of the 19th century with an emphasis on musical life and its development means that individual composers and their compositions are still of great importance, but they must be seen in a wider context. This conclusion has once again been highlighted by the work of *Swedish Musical Heritage*. This work has indeed given a detailed knowledge of many fascinating music personalities, but more than this it has demonstrated the importance of describing structural and material conditions for musical life, of describing the history of music from a broad perspective and not just from a narrow perspective that focuses only on a few chosen composers.

Abstract

Swedish Musical Heritage is a six-year-long project whose purpose is to make music, that is rarely played, more accessible so that it might gain a new audience. The project is funded by the Swedish Royal Academy of Music. Biographical texts on more than 300 Swedish composers, mainly unknown even for specialists in Swedish music history, provide a background for the use of the musical works, whether for performance or for research. The writing of these biographical texts is the topic of this article – the subject of which more precisely contains discussions around this rather old-fashioned task. The authors of this article are involved in this work in various ways and write from their respective starting points. The conclusion we have reached collectively is that the writing of biographies is of great value; the image of Swedish music history is deepened, female composers have become more visible, the musical life outside of Stockholm is described, and the great variety of roles a composer could have becomes clear.