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By Niels Krabbe

It is a well-known fact that Carl Nielsen’s oeuvre includes only two complete operas: "Saul and David" and "Maskarade," both composed in the years between 1899 and 1905. Later he composed incidental music for a great number of plays, but no more operas. As will be seen from the present article, however, he nourished ideas for further works within the opera genre, and both before and after the two finished works he had opera plans which in the end he never realised.

The fates of the two known operas, both at their first appearance and during their reception in the following years up to today, have been very different. "Maskarade" was an enormous success at the premiere, as well as in later restagings during the composer’s life both in Denmark and Sweden, and after his death and till now it has obtained a position as the ‘Danish National Opera’. It was thus – quite naturally – included in the list of twelve selected musical works included in former culture minister Brian Mikkelsen’s now forgotten cultural canon from 2006. Even in spite of Kasper Holten’s modernisation of its most recent production at The Royal Theatre in the 2010s – far from the world of playwright Ludvig Holberg on which the story was based – with an open-plan kitchen, Arv as a Polish guest worker, and the switch between when as human beings we wear masks and when we do not, it still seems to have survived.

"Saul and David" on the other hand, seems to have had more problems. First of all, it has had far fewer performances than "Maskarade," both in Nielsen’s time and after. Secondly and contrary to "Maskarade," it received a somewhat lukewarm public

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1 This article is a slightly revised version of my ‘Carl Nielsens ikke-realiserede operaplaner’, Fund og Forskning, 56 (2017), 297-334. Used by kind permission of the editors.

2 For a critical approach to the minister’s canon project, see my article ‘Den Danske musikkanon – generelle overvejelser og bemærkninger til udvalgte værker’ [The Danish music canon – general reflection and comments on selected works], in John T. Lauridsen and Olaf Olsen (eds.), Umisteligt. Festskrift til Erland Kolding Nielsen, Copenhagen 2007, 695-718.
and critical reception at its premiere in 1902. Politiken’s review discharges the follow-
ing ironic torrent of words:

If you add up Marshall Stig, Hans Heiling and Noureddin and calculate the mean, you will get a clear picture of this Saul, writhing with the most unbelievable operatic anguishs. The moment when the king falls on his sword, whirls round, makes a number of little jumps, and then collapses was one of the most dreadful death scenes we have ever experienced.

Later, however, a more urbane choice of wording is made for the criticism of the work in general – words, which later have been part of any review of the opera: that it is too stagnant because of the prominent position of the passages for choir:

If you want to benefit to any extent from Mr. Nielsen’s new opera, don’t go there with an expectation of an ordinary, theatrical opera, and do not expect to be overwhelmed by effects, but rather be prepared to stand face to face with a stern, serious, determined musician. You will not be facing a person who trims his opera with a kind of routine that is not unusual these days. Be prepared more than once during the evening to be confronted with an oratorio rather than with a music drama.4

After having praised the power of Vilhelm Herold’s voice (in the role of David) and the magnificence of the choir, Jyllands-Posten ends its review with the following prophetic words: ‘And yet – one does not feel absolutely certain that “Saul and David” will captivate the audience in the future.’

The last sentence has proved to be correct. None of the productions of the opera since the 1960s which I know of has caught on, and the most recent performances at the Royal Opera in Copenhagen, during the Nielsen jubilee year of 2015, in the English director David Pountney’s staging, are no exception. This treatment of the opera, which by that time had not been performed at our national opera stage in the previous 25 years, was dismal. It is understandable – when it comes to that – that a director will feel inclined to make the story of the Old Testament relevant to a modern audience by moving the plot to a non-specified Middle East totalitarian state. But the

3 Reference to the important characters in three operas which had been at the repertoire of The Royal Theatre in the years up to the premiere of Saul and David: Marshall Stig in Peter Heise’s King and Marshal, Hans Heiling in Heinrich Marschner’s opera carrying his name, and Noureddin in C.E.F. Horneman’s opera Aladdin.
4 Politiken, 29.11.1902.
radical change of important details in the story, such as Samuel’s merely simulated death leading to his overthrow of the anointed David at the final chord of the opera, is a violation of both the words and the music. Indications of such a conflict between the prophet and the royal throne are to be found neither in Einar Christiansen’s libretto nor in the Old Testament model. To which should be added that the chronology of the story breaks down.\(^5\) Rehabilitation of the work will probably last many years; who would – after this – dare to plunge into this masterwork once more?

The above observations on the reception of the two operas are thrown into relief by the fact that Nielsen himself felt quite the opposite: at every new performance he found that there were problems with \textit{Maskarade} (‘The girl with the crooked back’ as he called the third act), whereas as late as in 1929 he expressed a general satisfaction with \textit{Saul and David}. In an interview from that year, he summed up his view on the two works in the following words:

By the way, isn’t it strange that when \textit{Maskarade}, my latest opera, was performed again recently, there were many things on which I would take a different view and passages where I would accept both changes and abridgments, whereas in \textit{Saul and David} I could after all not think of any change. I suppose this is because when you are merry and gay, you will act rather casually, whereas when one deals with serious and elevated matters, you have already considered the situation and looked around for solutions.\(^6\)

\textbf{Unrealised Opera Plans}

Both before and after his two complete operas, each of which in its own way stands as a milestone in Danish opera history, Nielsen, as mentioned above, entertained plans for a number of other operas, which, however, never reached further than a preliminary stage.

The sources related to Nielsen’s life and work include information about an additional five opera projects, which in the end came to naught. For three of them loose sketches for the plot are available, and in some cases short musical sketches or individual ‘numbers’ are to be found. Nielsen’s working titles for four of the works in question are \textit{Judith}, \textit{Psycke}, \textit{The Silent Woman}, and \textit{Portia} – the last-named no doubt being the most interesting. Plans for the fifth unrealised opera project – based on

\(^5\) It should be mentioned, however, that in 1 Samuel chapter 8 there is a certain antithesis between Samuel and the Israelites concerning the wish of the people to have a king to govern the country. But this part of the Books of Samuel has nothing to do with the story of Saul and David as unfolded in Nielsen’s opera.

Jens Peter Jacobsen’s famous novel *Fru Marie Grubbe* [Mrs. Marie Grubbe] from 1876 – were probably given up mainly because the librettist Einar Christiansen considered the topic ill-suited for dramatic adaptation, as appears from his thorough explanation in a letter to Nielsen from 1911, ending in the following words:

> I am very sorry about this, because I would very much like to serve you and work together with you. But if this were to happen, we would have to find a different basis for our collaboration. I shall probably be back in town sometime this week, and then I shall telephone you. But I feel certain that not even during a conversation you will be able to make me change my mind when it comes to ‘Marie Grubbe’.7

**Judith (1890?)**, CNW A 2  
Already in the years around 1890 Nielsen had plans to write an opera built on the dramatic story from the Old Testament Apocrypha about Judith and her beheading of the enemy military commander, Holofernes.

Two different sources document this work: among the *Portia* papers (see below) there are three sheets in Nielsen’s hand, which in very general terms sketch the plot of a future opera on Judith;8 and in his little book of sketches, which he began at the end of the 1880s and apparently carried with him on his journey to Rome in 1900, a small unison piece with the title *Judith, Hyrdedrengens Melodi* (‘Judith, tune of the shepherd lad’) for oboe (CNW 416, facsimile in CNU IV/1, 283) together with a number of unfinished fragments with the titles *Judith, Kor og Dans til Judith*, *Judiths Dans* and (*Judith vender tilbage*) mystisk (‘Judith, choir and dance for Judith’, ‘Judith’s dance’ and ‘Return of Judith, mysterious’).9 The sketches only comprise a few bars each and from them one cannot form any impression of how the work would have developed. Neither in letters from the time nor in retrospect did Nielsen ever mention a possible opera about this episode from the Old Testament. It is possible that this interest in aspects of the history of the Israelites – not least the role ‘the people’, according to Nielsen’s synopsis, were to have taken – may have inspired him to start work on the story of Saul and David some years later: the more so, since there is a clear parallel between Judith’s fight on behalf of the Israelites against the Assyrian leader, Holofernes, and David’s against the Philistine warrior, Goliath.

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7 Letter from Einar Christiansen to Nielsen, 3.7.1911, CNB IV, 86-87.  
8 The Royal Library, Torben Schousboe’s Collection, XIV, 2.  

Amor and Psyke (1898)

Nielsen’s plans to write an opera based on the Greek myth about Amor and Psyche, known from a Roman source from the second century,10 are evident from an unfinished draft of the plot of the story written on the back of a letter of 28 March 1898 to some of his friends.11 The draft includes the first two acts of the opera, thus being

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10 The story of Amor and Psyche is known from Lucius Apulejus’ novel, *The Golden Ass.*
11 Letter from Sofie and Axel Olrik of 28 March 1898, CNB II, 32.
broken off before the myth has come to an end. At a certain point the composer even indicates his wish for a duet. Apart from this, no further references, not to speak of musical sketches, are known. The project does not seem to have gone any further, and soon Nielsen would be fully absorbed in work on *Saul and David*. The full draft reads:

**Act 1**

The oracle is consulted and answers that Pysche is to be dressed as a bride and placed on the desolate rock that is seen hanging precariously out over the sea. Psyche is called forth and adorned. She ascends the rock, to the grief of the people. Darkness falls, and the wind begins to blow. The torches go out. (Scene change). A grove with Amor’s golden castle on the right.

Spirits and genies surround Psyche who has been borne thither by the wind. They receive her as their mistress, and give her food and drink. A fanfare announces Amor’s arrival. The genies place a veil around Psyche’s face and command her not to open it in order to see the ruler of the castle.

Amor and Psyche (duet).

Closes with the two lovers entering the castle to tender caresses, embracing one another.

**Act 2**

Psyche alone. Later come her sisters (sneaky and wicked) to whom she shows all her splendour. The sisters walk through the castle and look at everything with curiosity. At a moment when Psyche is alone, Pan comes and warns Psyche of a danger that hangs menacingly over her head; he strengthens her conviction not to inquire who her master and lover is. The sisters return from their tour of the castle and now call upon Psyche to slay Amor at night in order thus to free herself. They give her a dagger. Darkness falls. Psyche lies down on a couch. Amor returns. While he is asleep, Psyche secretly gets up and fetches a lamp

**Portia (1898)**

Among the five unrealized opera projects which were on Nielsen’s mind at various points, an opera on Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* (under the working title *Portia*) seems to be the one which was closest to being realised and in which Nielsen was most whole-heartedly absorbed. His work with Shakespeare’s text took place in late 1898 and the beginning of 1899, but as late as 1928 he mentioned his old plans

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12 Translation by David Fanning, CNL, 166.
13 In the following discussion, *The Merchant of Venice* will be abbreviated MV.
in an interview with a Swedish paper in connection with a performance of *Saul and David* in Gothenburg. Here he recalls his old ideas:

*Saul and David* was written around the turn of the century. I had plans to write my first opera. I read a lot of text books and collaborated with various authors, but could not find a suitable subject. At a certain stage I was much obsessed with composing music for *The Merchant of Venice*. It got to the stage where the librettist had finished the first act. But still, this was not a subject I felt comfortable with. To select the theme for an opera is identical with trying on a costume. If you are to get something out of the subject, it has to fit and you must thrive in it.14

Probably during the autumn of 1898 Nielsen had begun a collaboration on Shakespeare’s opera with the poet Sophus Michaëlis, who was the same age as him. It is not known which of the two took the initiative. A few years earlier Michaëlis had written the libretto of *Aucasin and Nicolette* with music by August Enna – a work which Nielsen had attended at The Royal Theatre in Copenhagen without in any way finding it especially interesting. 15

Sources are available from both collaborators which until now do not seem to have evoked any interest on the part of Nielsen scholars: a complete fair copy of the libretto of the first act in Michaëlis’ hand (16 pages), and pencil sketches in Nielsen’s hand of the whole plot of the opera with numerous corrections (eight pages, see facsimiles and translation below). 16 During the process of work, however, Nielsen seems to have lost interest in the project, without informing Michaëlis, as may be seen from two letters by Michaëlis to the composer. In the first, from December 1898, he apologizes for not having started work soon enough, at the same time promising to send a sketch for the first act as soon as possible. That promise seems to have been fulfilled by the fair copy mentioned above:

Dear Carl Nielsen – I do think I bear most of the blame for the fact that ‘the damp has leaked out’. But this needs a long explanation. For two or three months I was so busy in Odense that I couldn’t work with anything related to literature. You were patient and did not remind me at any time. I have never experienced anything like that before. The very fact that you showed no impatience whatsoever made me suspicious: didn’t he on reflection like the plan we

14 Original in Göteborg Tidningen, 27.11.1928, repr. in Samtid, 505-07.
15 See CNB I, 430.
16 The Royal Library, Torben Schousboe’s Collection, XIV, 2.
had formed? I gradually came to view what I now understand was thoughtfulness on your side, as a tacit negation. That’s how weirdly a person can run rings around himself. In the end I thought that your silence – for which I owed you gratitude because it was actually indulgence – was a silent breach of our agreement. Now I urgently ask for your apology. Besides, long ago I did a great deal of the work, and now that I’ve finished other jobs, I shall begin the fair-copying. In a few days I shall send the first act to you, and the rest will follow soon.

[...]

A few days after Christmas we are going to Berlin, Vienna and Venice by land. I am especially looking forward to Venice. – I’ve always thought I might get some new inspiration for something beautiful in ‘Portia’.17

Almost a year later it seems that Michaëlis had still not heard a word from the composer and therefore felt obliged to send the following reproach:

I don’t know whether you have left already. But I would like to know what intentions you have with the text which you ordered from me last year. In December I sent the first act to you, but I did not hear anything about whether you had received it. You may remember how hesitant I was when it came to writing opera texts – after previous bad experience. I didn’t send any more to you because you didn’t utter a word about what you had already received. Now, today I have heard from informed sources that you are working on an opera – but not to my text. I was hurt by this. I don’t understand why you have told me nothing whatsoever about this. Admittedly we hadn’t made a contract which, as you will probably remember, I had wanted. But by receiving the beginning without sending it back again you were in any case anyway not released from the preliminary agreement between us.

As I said, I am very aggrieved at this behaviour which until now is quite incomprehensible to me.18

Later on, the two of them must have been reconciled, since Nielsen composed music to no fewer than five works by Michaëlis during the years to come.19

17 Letter from Sophus Michaëlis to Carl Nielsen, 13.12.1898, CNB II. 92-93.
18 Letter of 2.11.1899, CNB II, 150.
19 Hymn to Life (1921, CNW 376), Hymn to Art (1929, CNW 113), incidental music for Cupid and the Poet (1930, CNW 23), the song ‘We love you, our far North’ (1930, CNW 419) and Song for the Danish Cremation Society (1931, CNW 354).
There is much to indicate that it was Georg Brandes who aroused Nielsen’s interest in Shakespeare.\textsuperscript{20} Since the early 1890s he had associated with Brandes, and in a note in his diary from May 1893 he mentions a private visit to Brandes, including an enthusiastic description of his intellectual gifts.\textsuperscript{21} A year later, he asked Brandes for a letter of recommendation to the German painter and sculptor Max Klinger (giving Nielsen the chance to study Klinger’s ongoing work with his Beethoven monument).\textsuperscript{22} Probably the most decisive impetus, however, was Brandes’ epoch-making book on Shakespeare published in three volumes in the years 1895-96. In the Nielsen couple’s correspondence there are several references to Brandes’ monograph, and in one of her letters Anne Marie straightforwardly urges Nielsen to take an interest in \textit{The Merchant of Venice}:

His (i.e. Brandes’) Schakespeare [sic] is written very vivaciously and is very interesting. How would \textit{The Merchant of Venice} work as an opera[.] According to Brandes’ description I think it must be extremely appropriate, both because there is a fine atmosphere and merry details in it, and because it has a number of thorough character types in it.\textsuperscript{23}

Perhaps it was simply the presentation of Shakespeare’s work by Brandes that inspired Michaëlis and Nielsen to change the original title to \textit{Portia}. Brandes focuses to a great extent on her character in a gentle, almost infatuated description.\textsuperscript{24}

Portia’s nature is health, its appearance is joy, and its bright happiness is the element of her life. She descends from happiness, she grew up in happiness, she is surrounded by all the conditions and attributes of happiness, and she is distributing happiness with both hands. She is noble, right to the bottom of her heart; she is not a swan born in the duck-yard,\textsuperscript{25} but she is in harmony with her surroundings and with herself.

\textsuperscript{20} See also the article by David Fanning and Michelle Assay in the present volume.
\textsuperscript{21} ‘Brandes’ gift is both glittering and shining. He is constantly wide awake. I have the same feeling when I speak with him as when I fence with foils against Bertelsen’ – diary entry, 28.5.1893, CNB I, 297; CNL, 102.
\textsuperscript{22} Letter from Nielsen to Brandes 19.11.1894, CNB I, 394-96.
\textsuperscript{23} Letter from Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen to Carl Nielsen, 2.9.1897, CNB I, 530-31.
\textsuperscript{24} Brandes’ Shakespeare monograph is still one of the finest portrayals of Shakespeare’s life and work in Danish. The section about Portia can be found in his \textit{Samlede Skrifter}, vol. 8, Copenhagen 1901, 185 ff.
\textsuperscript{25} Reference to Hans Christian Andersen’s fairy tale, \textit{The Ugly Duckling}. 
Sophus Michaelis was also a great admirer of Brandes. It is thus difficult to decide which of the two text sources – Nielsen’s synopsis of the whole opera or Michaelis’ first act – is the original and which is the derivation (see Tables 1 and 2 below). Most likely, however, Nielsen wrote the synopsis for the whole opera first, after which Michaelis then began to work out the libretto based on the composer’s cues. Apparently, he never got any further than the first act as it is written in his manuscript and to which he waited in vain for a reaction from the Nielsen.

Both documents indicate that the final result would have been quite different from Shakespeare’s model, both when it comes to the plot and to characterisation. Immediately one notices that the character of Antonio, who in Shakespeare is the one that pawns a pound of his own flesh in order to get a loan from Shylock the Jew, is totally missing in Michaelis’ list of characters for the first act and strongly played down in Nielsen’s synopsis (see Table 1). Generally speaking, the serious and conflict-ridden parts of the plot seem to have been left out, in favour of the comical and lyrical parts. As an example, Nielsen’s text ends in complete harmony, totally leaving out the tiff in the fifth act of Shakespeare’s original in connection with the two lovers having given away their rings. Nielsen’s overall preoccupation in those days with joy, sun and light – which is to say the so-called ‘vitalism’ project that was prominent in certain circles at that time and in Nielsen’s cantata *Hymnus amoris* and his *Helios* Overture – dominates the end of the fourth act, and thus the whole opera:

> After that Portia throws away her disguise. (I find such behaviour better in an opera, where it becomes more lucid). Then Shylock arrives, casting a shadow over the whole scenery. When he has left again the sun rises far away above the golden domes and spires of Venice. Hymn to the sun, light, life, light and happiness (see the synopsis, p. 8).

Michaelis’ text as it is known from the fifteen handwritten pages in the Royal Library only comprises the first act of the planned opera, by and large equivalent to the first three pages of Nielsen’s sketch. Michaelis’ list of characters includes all Shakespeare’s main characters except Antonio, Tubal, the Clown and Giobbe. As may be seen on the facsimile of the first page, five of the characters’ names are underlined, probably indicating that they are meant to have singing parts in the work (see Appendix 2, below).

The libretto’s relation to Shakespeare’s model is somewhat loose. Some of the wording is very close to Shakespeare’s text; this goes for Bassanio’s description of his lady in Belmont (MV 1.1, 161-175), Shylock’s famous comparison of the feelings and senses of a Jew and a Christian (MV 1.3, 102.2-124), but without Antonio being
present in Michaēlis’ libretto, and MV 3.1, 48-66). On the whole Michaēlis’s first act consists of a selection of scenes taken from the first three acts of Shakespeare’s play, in a mix that focuses mainly on three aspects of the plot of the original play: the deal of the loan of the 3000 ducats (again without any mention of Antonio as the borrower); Lorenzo’s success in his carrying off Shylock’s daughter, Jessica; and Shylock’s despair at the loss of his money and his daughter.

There is no inner dynamic in the way the scenes are linked together, and there is none of Shakespeare’s characterisation of his cast. One could say that a certain pre-understanding of the Shakespearean text would have been a *sine qua non* for the audience, if they were to attend an opera on the text presented here in Michaēlis’ suggestion to Nielsen. And one might add that it was a stroke of luck that nothing came of the plans for *Portia, an opera by Sophus Michaēlis and Carl Nielsen*.

Michaēlis’ manuscript of the First Act is a mixture of prose and poetry in fixed meters and rhyming lines, the latter probably hinting to Nielsen that here an aria would be appropriate. The English translation below of the Danish original does not reflect the Danish rhymes (see Table 2).

Pages 1-3 were probably the source for Michaēlis’ libretto of Act 1. Contrary to Michaelis’ text, Antonio’s name is actually mentioned here.

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**[Page 1]**

**1st Act**

(Outside Shylock’s House)

Antonio, Basanio and Gratiano-Lorenzo.)

Bassanio asks Antonio to lend him money for his courting trip (?) to Belmont. Antonio, who has no cash, makes Shylock ... lend to him. S. who all the time has been sneaking into and out of his house grumbling at the three gentlemen,... to lend Bassanio the money in exchange for the well-known bond Gratiano and Bassanio invite Shylock to take part in a festivity (They leave)

**S’s. monologue full of poison and hate towards his enemies.** Comment: During the previous scene Gratiano has constantly been looking up at Jessica’s window, something which has not escaped the Jew’s attention.

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**[Page 2]**

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MV 2.5 **It became** It begins to get dark. S. leaves for the festivity, but before that he instructs Lancelot and Jessica to take good care of the house. Calmness. Moonlight. Jessica opens the window facing the canal and *sings* has a monologue with a melancholic and soulful content. **MV 2.6** is proper for moonlight and longing for passion. Then Gratiano arrives and carries her off as in Schackespeare [sic]. S., who suspects *returns* Jessica returns home and finds an empty house. *Shouts and cries* aloud. He shouts and cries like as a wild animal. (See Scha 1st Act 8th Scene). A number of [...?] people and urchins arrive. The boys whistle though their fingers towards S. [who...?] He *walks* runs across the bridge to the town shouting: My ducats! Law! Justice! my Daughter! The Duke! The whole crowd follows him, yelling and whistling, and thus they disappear further and further away.

**MV 2.7, 2.9** Act 2. Belmont

Portia and her chambermaid stand working with [...?] are busy with This act ought to begin straight away? quietly, little by little working itself up. Perhaps

**MV 3.2** Scene with a number of comical and touching suitors. Then Bassanio’s arrival (perhaps also a ballet) Portia’s and Bassanio’s love. [...?] Her fear at letting him choose from the caskets (see Act 3 Scene 2). His firm decision to want to [...]. His great confidence? His belief in his lucky star and fortune. He begins his choice, placing himself in front of the caskets, the three caskets singing to the glory of Portia and of his love. When he has made his choice everyone bursts out in joy and thus the act ends.

**Act 3. The courtroom**

A small scene which takes place before the court is in session. People arrive for the meeting we are told (either through Antonio or Bassanio who have hurried early to meet up who may have arrived earlier or through some court attendants who are tidying up in the court room), that Bassanio in the highest moment of his happiness has had to leave his beloved in order to save his friend. Then people arrive...
Then the whole court scene as in S., in such a way, however, that the duke concludes after Shylock’s exit concludes with words of praise addressed to Portia about the court will stay victorious forever and a description of the laws of Venice which once again have appeared to be and some general remarks on justice and humanity, which will always defeat wickedness and vindictiveness. The people shout ‘Long live the Duke’. Thus the act ends in a serious, dignified and grandiose tone.

4th Act

Lorenzo and Jessica report that Portia and her chambermaid are staying in a convent while Bassanio is in Venice. Then the scene as in S. The infatuation by moonlight as in S. Then Bassanio and Antonio arrive. Later, Portia and her chambermaid in lawyers’ cloaks. They have been invited by Bassanio but have taken another route. Portia [in disguise] tells Bassanio that she doubts that Portia and her chambermaid have visited the said convent while Bassanio was in Venice. Bassanio She swears by all that is holy that she has seen both of them in Venice. Little by little Bassanio becomes worried and jealous. Finally, Portia throws off her disguise. Comment (I think this is better suited to an opera, it is more lucid). Then Shylock arrives, casting a shadow over the whole scenery. When he has left again the sun rises far away above the golden domes and spires of Venice. Hymn to the sun, light, life, light and happiness.

Table 1: Carl Nielsen’s synopsis for the whole opera, annotated translation of a diplomatic transcription of the Danish text in the manuscript (see facsimile of the manuscript at the end of the present article).
The following characters in Shakespeare’s play are missing in Michaëlis’ list of characters: Antonio (‘The Merchant’ in Shakespeare’s title), Lancelot (Shylock’s servant, who leaves him in favour of Bassanio) and Lancelot’s father Gioppe (see Table 2).

It is both striking and radical that Antonio never appears in the first act, and apparently, according to the plan, was not meant to appear at all in Michaëlis’ libretto.

In MV Antonio’s melancholy, not Bassanio’s, is the topic of the introductory conversation of the play.
Niels Krabbe

Bassanio
The art of creating gold –
rather call it: creating debt!

Gratiano
This art you have practised for a long time –

Bassanio
And still I do not master it!

Gratiano
Look at these empty pockets!
Easy come, easy go.

Bassanio
I fired all my golden arrows
towards the golden bird of Mrs. Fortuna –
now I only need one shot
to make the lady finally smile at me.
Everything has been shot away –
provide a little powder for me,
then things will go smoothly:
I shall hit the mark.

Gratiano
Where does the bird sit on which you are aiming?

Bassanio
In Belmont lives a lady, rich in inheritance,
but a thousand times more by virtue and beauty.
The reputation of beautiful Portia is known far and wide,
for the wind blows suitors her way,
as if the sunshine ringlets of the fair
were the golden skin of Kolkos’ strand.
Still, her gaze has tacitly promised me victory:
I believe that Eros made me into a Jason,
if only my ship could get somewhat better sails!
(pointing to his clothes and opening his worn mantle)
Gratiano
Indeed, your outfit could do with some improvement.

Bassanio
Get me 3.000 shabby ducats,
then I shall bring back the golden fleece.

Gratiano
A little golden rain, yes!
from where should it be raining?
Is there no cloud in heaven,
that can shed a little gold into this hat?

Linkage of 1.3 (the covenant of the loan of 3000 ducats) and Lorenzo’s plans to carry Jessica off (MV 2.3, 16 ff.)

Psst, Lorenzo! Look, look –
why are you tip-toeing like a cat?

Lorenzo (from the bridge)
Hush! Behind these windows
a God is living, a God of all Gods!

Gratiano
Who is living in the house?

Bassanio
Shylock, the Jew.

Gratiano
Ha, ha! Lorenzo, You are wooing his purse?

Lorenzo
No, his daughter.

Gratiano
And here Bassanio to his ducats.
Then unite!

Lorenzo
I do not ask permission of the Jew.

Bassanio
He will not lend me a brass farthing without a bond.
In MV it is Antonio, who makes the covenant of the loan of 3000 ducats, offering a bond of a pound of his own flesh as security (MV 1.3, 139-49)

Lorenzo
Nonsense, you must try!
Let us get the Jew out here! I will knock at the door at once, if only to get a glimpse of Jessica!

Shylock (at the door)
What do you want of me?

Gratiano (drags him out, while Lorenzo adroitly puts his head through the door-opening)
Listen! You must raise money!

Shylock (quickly turning round)
Away from the door! Are you going to commit burglary? (slams door locked)

Lorenzo (aside)
Now it has happened! Here is my loot (hides a letter)

Gratiano
Lend us 3000 ducats!

Shylock
The bond? Is it a good bond? Is it a good man?

Gratiano (pointing at Bassanio)
See for yourself! Here is – the good man.

Bassanio
Joking apart! Lend me 3000 ducats!

In MV the whole of this exchange of words is between Antonio and Shylock, not between Bassanio and Shylock.

The important adversarial relationship between the two ‘merchants’, Shylock and Antonio (culturally, economically and religiously), has completely disappeared from Michaëlis’ text.
Shylock (stares fixedly at Bassanio for a long time)

Tell me, master, has a mongrel –money?

Oft you have scolded me for being a lousy dog!

Do you believe that I can now spit out golden ducats in return for every time you have spat at my beard, when I ran my business at the Rialto?

Bassanio

A blodsucker you were – therefore I spat:

You never lent out without bloody usury.

But if only you had had a Christian soul towards me, by my God, we would never forget that you are a Jew!

Shylock

.... and become a friend of mine! I see, I see ...

Dear Sir, do forgive me that only now do I forget how you spat and scorned me!

In thanks for your fair Christian spirit, do take my money without interest and without a bond.

Am I kind towards you now?

Bassanio

If you meant this, that would show kindness.

Shylock

Done! You shall have 3000 ducats.

The contract is signed between Bassanio and Shylock, not, as in MV, between Antonio and Shylock.
Bassanio
Bravo, Shylock!
You may depend on my friendship!
You will be as dear to me as flesh and blood.

Shylock
O yes – like your flesh and blood – for my money I will have your
flesh and blood – What do you think if we state in the contract,
that if you do not pay back in due time, then you shall pay – shall
we say – a pound of flesh, which I myself can take from your body
wherever I may choose?

Bassanio
Three months’ credit? (Shylock nods)
If so, there is no danger!

Shylock
Danger? O Father Abraham, how can you have any fear?

MV 1.3, 156 ff.
What should I do with a pound of your flesh?

I think even beef is worth more than that. I
only want to be your friend. Do step inside,
then we will draw up the contract!
(enters the house with Bassanio)
(to Lorenzo) Away from my door!

Gratiano
Lorenzo, you are shining like a reflection of the Jew’s bright gold.

Lorenzo
Yes, this letter is the sun, the white letter of my bliss – though even
whiter is the hand that wrote bliss to me!

MV 2.4, 12-14
Fair Jessica is mine! I can hear the beating of her heart:
towards mine, towards mine it flies through house and battens.
She is as wise and pure as the pure diamond, and she is fair if ever
mine eyes speak truly!
So fair and wise and honest from hair to heel
shall she live and forever thrive in my faithful soul!

Gratiano
When is your break-in to take place, Lorenzo?
Lorenzo
Tonight she shall flee with me – dressed up in a page’s cloak.
Masked I shall steal away from Bassanio’s feast.
Through the window she will descend like a sun.

Gratiano
And I shall meet you with a fast gondola!
(both exit in different directions.)

Bassanio og Shylock

Bassanio
Shylock, you are my friend.
Never did I meet such a worthy Jew.
Make me happy, come to me immediately tonight
and have a meal with me and my friends!

Shylock
I shall come. But, Signor, remember:
do not tempt me with pork!
(Bassanio leaves)

Shylock (spitting after him)
Shame! Your own flesh tempts me.
I hate you and all Christian dogs
who have pushed my people into the dust
– Vendetta I would have, if only I could!
Israel’s tribe is exiled in the desert,
accompanied by the whips of mockery with bended heads,
and not a drop to quench our thirst in the drought,
while we are wandering around, born to be scorned.

MV 3.1, 48-66,
when it has
turned out
that Antonio
will not be able
to pay.

Has not a Jew eyes, mouth and limbs
and senses like the Christian? Is the blood of Levi not red?
Isn’t he fed by the same nourishment, poisoned by the same venom
and dying the same death?
Cannot his lips smile, his eyes cry, and when he is wounded, will he
not bleed then, and when kicked, must he not glow with vengefulness?
Revenge! God of Israel, let the enemy fall into my hands!
Sentenced to your – the judge’s – sharp knife!
Once and for all I will quench in flesh and blood
the grudge saved up for millions of lives!
Revenge! God of Israel,
let the enemy fall into my hands!

(he goes to the door, waving at Jessica)

Jessica, take my keys, protect my house!
I have been asked out tonight– I only accept out of hate,
to gorge on the lavish Christians – they fawn on my gold.
Look after the house, don’t look out of the window
at the bawl and farce of the Christian fools.!
Bolt all the shutters of my sober house!

(carefully locking the door and leaving)

Dusk has approached. Bright moonshine falls on Shylock’s house, glittering
in the water of the canal.

Jessica (opening the window facing the canal)

Wave, do you gurgle down there –
towards the sea, towards the sea –
The swan is rocking from her nest.
Soon I myself shall spread my wings,
follow like a migratory bird
the call from the sea, towards the sea,
build my nest on the mountaintop

Come Lorenzo, long awaited,
bring me the burning glow of life.
It is cold here in the stuffy room –
proudly the ship will sail along
towards a mild and sunny beach,
where – like bridal candles on the meadow –
young hearts are on fire!

Gratiano (arriving with the gondola)
Friends, let the lagoon sway
to the amorous tones of the lute!
Upon the singing waves
the torchlight will skim like gold.
[page 13]

Lorenzo (from the bridge: masked)
Jessica, your happiness is calling!

Jessica (in the window)
I wonder who stands before the door here?

Lorenzo
Jessica, your happiness is calling –

Jessica
And I move towards the happiness.

Lorenzo
Come, my boy, my torchbearer!

Jessica (jumps out; disguised as a page)
Extinguish your torch! Hide my shame!

Lorenzo
No, my page is my admirer.

Jessica
Oh, I blush in my skin.

Lorenzo
Come, you are tarrying too long –
our escape must be fast!

[page 14]

Jessica (handing him a casket)
Here are gems and money – our escape shall be golden!
(they leave in the gondola with Lorenzo and Gratiano)

Gratiano (The song becomes distant)
Friends, let the laguna swing
to the starry sound of the lute!
Upon the singing waves,
the torchlight will skim in gold.

Total silence. The stage remains empty for some time. Shylock comes sneaking, anxiously and quickly, stops, and suddenly notices the open window with the rope ladder hanging down, rushes into the house – goes to the window – and then out of the door again.
Shylock (shouting)
My daughter!
My ducats!
My daughter has run away!
run away with a Christian,
run away with my gold!
Damnation. Damnation!
Justice!
Stop them!
Stop the thief! Stop my daughter!
Stop my ducats!
Two bags of ducats!

In MV 2.8, 12-22 it is Salanio, who tells us of Shylock's reaction, not Shylock himself who expresses his grief.

People crowd together. Urchins howl and whistle through their fingers.

Chorus
His daughter – his ducats –
Ducats and his daughter!
Hahahahahaha!
Haha! We shall die from laughter!

Shylock (furiously towards them)
What are you laughing at, spawn of a lizard!
May cancer devour your tongues!
Justice!
The law shall seek them!
The law shall find them!
Give me back my daughter. Provide my gold!
Get me back my jewels!
I wish she were lying dead at my feet
with the stones in her ears
and the ducats in her coffin!
Justice!
The law!
The Duke!
My daughter!
My ducats!

(Runs across the bridge, followed by the howling and whistling crowd).
CURTAIN

Table 2: Sophus Michaëlis’ libretto of the first act, annotated translation of manuscript in Torben Schousboe’s Collection XIV, 2 (see facsimile of the whole manuscript at the end of the present article).

A single musical source is known in addition to the above-mentioned textual sources, namely the following unison ten-bar sketch with the heading ‘Comic courting (Prince of Aragon?)’ and the tempo marking Moderato (see Nielsen’s synopsis above, page 4):

Moderato

Ex. 1. Transcription from Nielsen’s sketchbook, The Royal Library, CNS 358a, fol. 72.

The Silent Woman (1926-1930), CNW A 2
For more than four years Nielsen was pondering writing an opera on the English playwright Ben Jonson’s comedy Epicoene, or The Silent Woman, performed in London in 1609. According to his own information, he got the idea from reading ‘Taine’s book on English literature’ (see letter to Ove Jørgensen below). Later on, he seems to have discussed the idea with his wife Anne Marie, which is evident from a letter to her from May 1926 with the following short instruction: ‘Thank you for the postcard. If you have not contacted The Royal Library yet, don’t bother about Ben Jonson’. About

26 Hippolyte Taine, Den engelske Litteraturhistorie (French edition, 1863-64; Danish translation, 1874-77)
27 Letter from Nielsen to Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen, 12.5.1926, CNB IX, 190.
a month later he reports from Damgaard that he and his old friend from Conservatoire days, Margrethe Rosenberg, are in full swing translating Jonson’s comedy into Danish, adding somewhat sarcastically: ‘I even think it’s good for her to ponder on something else than her perpetual “Dreigliederung” and Steiner’. The most exhaustive report on the work – which at the same time is an exposition of the main elements of Jonson’s plot – is found in a letter from the summer of 1926 from Nielsen to another friend from his youth, Ove Jørgensen:

Talking about Jonson! It is not in order to learn English that I am going over The Silent Woman. The gist of the matter is that some months ago I was in bed and read about this comedy in Taine’s book on English literature and – to tell you a deep secret – I felt like writing an opera on this topic; and as the comedy is neither available in any Scandinavian language nor in German or French, I got hold of an old English edition in The Royal Library and asked Miss Rosenberg to assist me in the translation of it. It is a masque comedy and the plot is the usual one with a rich uncle who cannot stand the slightest noise without flaring up etc., and a nephew who makes a fool of him, almost as in Holberg. Don’t you see the musical potential? Nothing can be more fortunate for a composer: first the servants’ silence and whole attitude which may be interrupted by a barrel organ in the courtyard; then the master’s anger, again silence expressed through whispering music, after that the visit by the disguised and simulating ‘Silent Woman’ by whom he becomes tricked into marrying; after that intruding and congratulating friends and guests who make a hell of a noise (as agreed on beforehand). And then ‘The Woman’, who as soon as he has signed the marriage contract exposes herself as a chatty, noisy, rowdy and crazy slut, which fills him with insane horror. And finally at the very end a conciliatory solution.

It seems, however, that Nielsen soon got cold feet, even if thoughts on The Silent Woman were still rummaging around at the back of his mind. In a letter to his wife from July 1928 – that is, two years later – he returned to the matter, but now including reflections about how at his age it would probably be more ‘appropriate’ – as he puts
it – to engage with a topic more serious than Ben Jonson’s tomfooleries, for example *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes, which Anne Marie seems to have suggested to him.\(^{30}\)

The last time Nielsen mentioned his opera plans was in an interview with the Swedish newspaper, *Göteborg-Tidningen*, from 14 December 1930, although it is not absolutely clear whether it is actually *The Silent Woman* he is talking about.\(^{31}\) Asked by the journalist, he says that he has a text ready for a new comic opera in two acts, which he is already working on, and which he intends to have performed in Gothenburg when it is finished. But he does not mention which text he is talking about.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that musical ideas for *The Silent Woman* were on his mind during these years, at the same time as he was occupied with other works. In six of the sources for these works one can find short sketches explicitly labelled as ideas for *The Silent Woman*; the manuscripts in question – all in Nielsen’s own hand – are:

a) Draft (autograph) of the *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra* (CNW 43, source B, spring 1928): on page 19 of the draft there is a twelve-bar sketch with the title ‘Allegretto moderato (Rondo?) or “The silent Vife [sic]”’.

b) Fair copy (copy and autograph) of *Rhapsody Overture. An Imaginary Journey to the Faroe Islands* (CNW 39, source A, 1927), end-dated ‘Copenhagen 6 November 27’

On the verso of the last sheet is a five-bar sketch for two voices (treble and bass clefs) with the heading ‘End of stanza in *The Silent Women* [sic!]’ with the tempo indication *Allegretto*. The sketch has a considerable number of articulation and dynamic indications [see Example 2].

![Example 2](image)

**Ex. 2.**

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30 Letter of 25.7.1928, CNB X, 244; CNL, 711.
31 *Samtid*, 568-69.
c) Pencil draft of 29 Little Preludes for Organ or Harmonium (CNW 96, source D, beginning of 1929):

Page 7 (in the middle of Prelude no. 7): two bar motif with the heading The Silent Woman (in Nielsen’s hand).

Pages 33-34 (after Prelude no. 29 and pencil draft of the song ‘Flower pollen from profusion’, CNW 343): the first 12 bars of an Andantino for piano (CNW 91), which is known in full from three other sources (one autograph and two copies). The marking Andantino in Nielsen’s hand is followed by a later (librarian’s?) addition in brackets: [The Silent Woman]; in bb. 3 and 4 the left-hand stave is blank. It clearly looks like a casual sketch with corrections and deletions. The movement is included in facsimile in CNU IV/1, Add. 25, source A with the following cryptic addition, also in Nielsen’s hand: ‘This piece is fixed and insured in “The United Jutlandic Fire Insurance under the brand “Poplar Leaf””. One of the two copies of the movement in The Royal Library is part of the uncatalogued material of the Carl Nielsen Collection whereas the other copy carries the signature C II, 10. Both copies have the heading in a foreign hand: The Silent Woman. As may be seen above, none of the titles of the four sources for The Silent Woman are in Nielsen’s hand; they are all added by another. The connection between the movement and the planned opera thus seems to rest on a very fragile foundation. Both the added text mentioned above and the musical appearance of the movement rather indicate some kind of joke. If, on the other hand, this sketch does belong to the opera, it is the only fully written-out movement of The Silent Woman.

Page 36 (after the pencil draft of the song ‘It’s over for a short respite’): 32 eight-bar sketch in two parts with the title The Silent Woman and the tempo indication Allegretto vivo.

d) Three Motets (CNW Coll.24), pencil sketch C, spring 1929.

Motet no. 3, page 2, lower system: Two bars followed by a repetition mark with the title The Silent W. in Nielsen’s hand. The sketch is followed directly by a sketch of the alto and bass motifs in bb.46 ff.

e) Amor og Digteren (CNW 23), spring 1930.

Complete pencil draft of the overture to Michaëlis’ play, end-dated ‘Klintholm 9-4-30’. On the reverse of the first folio of the overture are added several indetermini-

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32 The two songs in this manuscript on pages 33 and 35 (CNW 343 and 344) were published as To Skolesange af Viggo Stuckenberg sat i Musik af Carl Nielsen [Two School Songs by Viggo Stuckenberg set to music by Carl Nielsen], Birkerød [State School], 1929.
nate sketches in ink and pencil. At the top of the page a single two stave-system with 7 bars (bar 3 crossed out) is added with the title in Nielsen’s hand ‘Allegretto. Silent Woman’.

f) Unidentified musical bifolio in Nielsen’s hand with the title The Silent Woman (CNS 357b/2): half of an A4 bifolio with music on both sides, comprising four incipits, each notated on two systems (see Examples 3-6 below).

Ex. 3

Ex. 4

Ex. 5
These short musical sketches related to *The Silent Woman* were apparently notated casually and spontaneously, on manuscript paper containing music of other works on which the composer happened to be working. As is apparent from the list above, Nielsen seems to have used any manuscript paper that was to hand at a given time, writing down his ideas on any stave that happened to be free. The sketches over a period of four years, combined with Nielsen’s own remarks in the interview quoted above about his ongoing work on a new opera, could indicate that at a certain time more substantial material for an opera on Ben Jonson’s *The Silent Opera* existed. If so, this is now lost. But in any case it seems beyond doubt that he was preoccupied with such a work and that ideas came to his mind concurrently with his work on other compositions.\footnote{Five years after Nielsen had given up Ben Jonson’s comedy, Richard Strauss wrote his opera, *Die schweigsame Frau*, based on the same text!}

One by one, and for various reasons, Nielsen’s opera plans, as sketched above, came to nothing, and as we all know, he never finished other operas than the two well-known works from the beginning of the century, *Saul and David* and *Maskarade*. The five fragments, however, show how at certain periods of his life he had thoughts on further contributions to the opera genre – in the early years as a logical consequence of his great interest in international opera, in connection with his self-educational tours, and towards the end of his life perhaps rather as a token of the fact that he had by then overcome his many frustrations with regard to The Royal Theatre – the only theatre in Denmark at that time that would have had the resources to mount a new opera by him.
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Nielsen’s synopsis of the whole opera (excluding the two pages between pp. 5 and 6 with a synopsis of the beginning of Judith), manuscript in The Royal Library in Copenhagen, Torben Schousboe’s Collection, XIV,2.
Bemærkning:
Under den tøffeformer mum har grundens stade længere op til tjæssia, hun har i alt været 9 år.

Pet bliver det begyndes at

Smørrebro, jeg har taget

Fæstet, men grundlægges først

den samlet og tjæssia af

Passt godt på blant.

Majemærke

Stillede, Fæstet og delvis

Vindret vil de være, har

og synger en melenskubsk

såv znaleźć

Indhold: Monolog
Nielsen’s Unrealised Opera Plans

på vej til Marakessen og til Kom
	Saa kommer Grothens
og bortfører nogle som har
Schæringen, I som Man Mi-
tanken under til Rusiens, virker
min finde. Herav tænkt, at det

Hans maler og skriver
som et velat Ogy. (De Fromm i det læs)
En Olyg, jakie.sammen og gode

hens, kommer. Annoncer givet
i frimod af I. Skoog. Hans

forve over Bræn und at Byen

maler: ny Danke! Lov. Det er

en Sætning! Nu Otho! Hæringen!

Hes tænkte fikse ham med

Byen og Otho og sandwe forskr

al de langsom og Langen bort.
Nielsen’s Unrealised Opera Plans

Text:

Bruce og hans kammermusik.

Af Imaginære Motiver og lange inspirerende

Tone af Aktet skabeln betød at

Jeg ønsker, at det vil stille sig og

som med nogle komiske og novela
de f.eks. (og nå, Bassetes tankes

Comeback og nu Ballet) Portier og Basso

musik afhandlet. Kan du sende mig

for at lade ham velge at ændre det

ger fra fem) Hans Reut Bretten

at vi vil gøre, han er en god

Jeg og syvem. Han vilde ved
de tøn skrin
Hjørne og synger til Portræt Cris
og om sin Hjørnecris. Nu vej
fore vindt bryder et lidt i Glos
og sundrude under afstør.

Bokstavet Reformation
I en lille Søren som Jerusalem indst
kommer fra det Hvorat
Reformation ikke de Karmen og
Reformation der op gør man at virks Centen
en kranke af og gennem
Bassamio som fremad ret
at vore mygle tidligt
hedan de alt snuvel eller gennem
nogle Reformation som gør og ordre
afst i folken) at Bassamio i sin
dysker først i Gleske har møttet
nir for sin Elektron fra at frels
sin Unm. — Firehveds Falke
Venedig. Dernan om Lovet vides.

Maanskins varemøn, som May

J. Saa hører Bassanios der
tone afhæng. Senere Portia og hende,

Kammerpjes i Advokat-Regnsk.

De er mellemst af Bassa-

nig, men er tagt en anden Vej.

Portia skriftet Bassanio att hun

trivde man at Portia og hende

Kammerpjes hav været i det centale

Klostet, men Bassanio var i Venedig.

Bassano hav overtagt høft og helst

at hun har set dem ligge i Vene-
dig. Bassanio meléj og høen
Forklaringen. Dette foregår i den
i en Opera, da er mere anerkendt.
Iaen kommer Sølvd og kører en
skærm over den bull. Da stem
eller, gør åen støv. Sølvd og Lavst
bør være Vincenzo gudom. Kapito
og Spis. Ispis, tre Sølvd, Lyset
Indt, Lyset og Lykke.
Nielsen's Unrealised Opera Plans

1. Akt

1. Act

Hulberts Fejer.

2. Akt

2. Act

Hulberts Tårne. Hoved. Akt

2. Akt

2. Act

3. Akt

3. Act

(Natt) en ensom Mand, der holder

3. Akt

(Natt) en ensom Mand, der holder

Voldtag fra Minne. Læt efter lidt

3. Akt

Læt efter lidt

blinde at hynde i Horisonten og endelig
1ste Aet.

II. Fest. Nogle anecdote før.

Achier ind. Hans Foren er kernen
paa Bygger. Deres festligt før glade først
nu lidt efter lidt paa Grund af den Del-
tagelse og stigning i Sagen. Å § Fortalt
nokke åbenbar Faldet. Der stømmer len
og der til. En enkelt Gruppe nåagt
løste hukommelse omdre Lydtagning. Men
snart saaetme oymen oym og alt Faldet.

Men den lydtagning. Forudet i Sagen er
nu forsamlings om Achier og

Racheal svarer. Nu er men fortalt.
Politiken for 27 April (1)
for 9 April (2)
Ja, vi blev reddet som blev.

Dog saaledes at Landen Stifter

et bekymringsfortgang smulter med

nuværende Ord til Portico.

også om at saaledes mit Datter.

Vendte love som altid har været og

at være og nuelse almægtige

børn om ærligt og sundhedspleje

aldrig med sig over Prinsens

Velsignelse glosest, med. Folket mener

at "Lemm Hertug". Anlæg slutter

saaledes sådan en selverlig, venselig og

gandens Jom.

Lorenzo og Jessica ophæver alt Portico.

og Maurice. Dermed er det
Nielsen's Unrealised Opera Plans
Appendix 2: Sophus Michaëlis' libretto of Act 1, manuscript in The Royal Library in Copenhagen, Torben Schousboe's Collection, XIV.2.
Nielsen's Unrealised Opera Plans

Forst Aft

Offentlig: Blods i Venedig. I Bagværdes Kanel.

Bassanio og Gratiano mødes Kuven.

Gratiano

Bassanio, mio ven, vel mest!

Alt er nu klarfæst

Det er, der grinder dybt

Der kendt er gøre guld.

Bassanio

Der kendt er gøre guld—

er det ikke en guld?
Grahans

De hånd er frysked lange —

Bassanis

Og kan den ej altjen!

Grahans

Se disse tommes Lommen!

Led gaar, hoved let de kanne.

Bassanis

Ned til Fortinas storefi og skød

i alle mine gredne vil —
i vilde vi sin et midt Krud;

at en kilk. Danne skat til vi j smil.

I alt bold vi skud

skat vi ej st Krud,

som gaar det let!

Rumme vi skal

lye i Sted.

Grahans

Hvor sidder Dame, ej kel ligge pan?
Bassanio

I Balneari bor en Dame, en jeg ved
Kendt gangen var vi begge i
Portia

Rig gør de af de døde

Dei ville laa Bjelkare i

Som var de Spanier fra det

Selve det gjort Svindel paa Kolkos Strand.

Dei hørte: "Blik kan end mig de fjerne

Dei hør, at Eros kanse mig til Jovar,

Om det vil skænke bo est både luft!

(paa paa en bro og spille

i Ledisk Kappe i)

Gratiano

Ja vil le, de hører det at fire op det Brand.

Bassanio

Stop mig over haver det i dette,

Men skal jeg fjerne det jorden Brand.

Gratiano

Lis Sædregen ja!

Hvor skal Idek regne fra?

Hvor kunde ingen Bag!

der siges kan list finde: demm Hat.
Pdi, Lorenzo! Se, er —

somfor gør man at pane Tan von e kæl?

Lorenzo (fr Brosen)

Tys! Æg dem Råder

sein bør en Gud, en Gud for alld Guder!

Gratiano

Hvem bør i Himmel?

Bassanio

Jøda, Mylord.

Gratiano

Haha! Lorenzo, du bør ikke la den Bing?

Lorenzo

Ja, je komy Datter.

Gratiano

Og her Bassanio til komy Noktern.

Se skil mej vanne!

Lorenzo

Ly spørge ikk Jøda en Noktern.

Bassanio

Viis kranke han ej em kriv for dere Paul.
Lorenzo

Snak, er disse prøve!

Hvis du siger, så er det bare prov.

for blik at skrive af Jessica af fun!

Shylock (i Doron)

Hvad er alt i mig?

Gonzalo (natter han fra, mens Lorenzo ved

her natter hoved i ved Dorothys)

Her! Vi mål hæffe en?

Shylock (veden af hvert om

Bort fra Doron! Vi er begindt! (natter Doron

Lorenzo (udgår)

Alt er det skel! Her er mit Bryth. (bider af Doron)

Gonzalo

Laen os vores Dukken!

Shylock

Pant? Og Pant? godt? Og hvad godt?

Gonzalo (jegs for Bassanio)

Selv! En skærm - den godt hvad.

Bassanio

Søjde le sli! Laen os vores Dukken!
Skylock (se længst stift på Bassanio)

Mig, Herre, har du røver – røver?

Hvor tid har jeg nu røvet en stund langt!

Torbjørn, jeg vil have gyttje. Giv mi skadder!

for hvor gød, ville jeg gerne i mit ryg,

nuve på Rio Grande sommertid derei?

Bassanio

Bloddyv om det – derfor gyttje ir:

I lægt set, jeg kunne haft Ansen.

Men kand jeg da Kristian spred eng og mig!

ved gød, om jeg i gyttje, da er fjære!

Skylock

... og bliver nu ven! Ja, ven, ja ven:

Kære Herre, jeg vil dig, at først vi iglænse,

hvordan jeg gyttje og forlade mig!

Til Tak for disse unike Kristendom,

tog mig gyttje og forlade Rentz

ty og røver Pont. Er vi igjødt?

Bassanio

Ment da det, det ind var goder!

Skylock

Gød! Jeg stod for 3000 Dukater.
Nielsen's Unrealised Opera Plans

Bassania

Føldes Rand?

Grahaen og Lorego

Er jorden gal?

Nyloch

Føldes Rand!

Bassania

Brave Nyloch!

Gør Regning paa mit Kæled!

Du er nu en af min Kæled.

Nyloch

Oja - om Stør Kæd af Ald -

for min Kæde før er Din Kæd af Ald -

Hav mere Ud - Vi eraller i Kirkehallen,

at vi Gjæ bør til alle Tide betale

en Kæde af - hvad mere Ud - at況spil Kæd,

er vel kan være, hvad er det - Stær Kæp?

Bassania

I'm Mammon Churches? (Nyloch nicker)

Laa har det ingen Fan!

Nyloch

Fan? O Fader Abraham, hvor kan el Fyrh?

Heal skel dig ud af Start af Stær Kæd?
Jeg tør, vel Oxkept er mere nødt.
Jeg vil finde sin Klo. Godt indefor,
saa salter i Kontrabla og!
(saa i og Barreino)
(te Lorenzo) Godt for min Dr.

Gratian

Lorenzo, det står til vest Gorden
og Inder Blone Gud.

Lorenzo.

Sa, dette Børn i Løben, vii Lykke kniv Børn-
saa hviden er Haarden, saa Lykken til mig Børn!
saa hviden er Haarden, saa Lykken til mig Børn!
saa hviden er Haarden, saa Lykken til mig Børn!
saa hviden er Haarden, saa Lykken til mig Børn!

Gratian

Men skal dit huskaid des, Lorenzo?

Lorenzo.

I Aften fagte hini med cinj - i Aagard.

Der skal finde sind i fra Barreinos Selte.

Sag minen Kinder med hini Aigner som i sel.
Nielsen's Unrealised Opera Plans

Gestano

3 jeg skal med mig til Rapp Sondel!  
(Buze ud i forfulds nede)

Bassanio

Bassanio

Bassanio

Bassanio

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Shylock, det er min Ver.
En de en færd igt frem, reiser og lægger
og lægger som de kriske? Og det gør ej midt!
Hos den lille af de samme sprog
fantis af samme sild og dø og de samme flød?
Kan ej have lære de, hose ej midte,
og kan ej have saavel, man kan de ej blive
og新たさ, ken i 還都ft pibenlod?

Han! Israel! Guild, giu synde: ni naald!
Han! Israel! Guild, giu synde: ni naald!
Kam fader i din ære Dommerland!

Oppenhet høj for millionne liv
At sitte ud ansigt: Her og Blod!
i sitte ud ansigt: Her og Blod!

Han! Israel! Guild, giu synde: ni naald!
(gardzi døren og vinkle til Jessica)
Jessica, tog mig højst, vogt mig thi!

Kay best is o te Afton – gac, ni iz af hiod,
u kan paa de ædle kristne – de skræk for midt giud,
og vel paa hiod, Eij ni iz af Niisud.
Paa vel paa hiod, Eij ni iz af Niisud,
affre de Kristne Paris, France og binneap.

Støv all skotter fer mid theett iis!

(lever omgjort)
Jessica (skæve viser ud til vandet)

Bølge, Glimtke & Jesmer —
fort mod havet, fort mod havet —
svane viger fra sin Rød.

Sned projektert stad Vigen sprækk,
fort mod havet, fort mod havet,
fort mod havet, fort mod havet,
synge Slippeløg min Rød.

Kom, Lorenzo, nu hurtig langt!
kom mit Liebe, Hans-Jeg!

Det er godt, at vi kører langt —
fort mod havet, fort mod havet,
fort mod havet, fort mod havet,
fort mod havet, fort mod havet.

En stund med mig over Fjæra —
Hvor er Brødebek / Suka,
synge Slippeløg min Rød.

Gratiens (Benne mit Sondere)

Vener, du lange som syngel
i de lagt, Hæng af Løkth!

Hør en Bøgmer, som synge,
fort mod havet, fort mod havet.
Lorenzo (fra Borea; maske!

Jessica, din lykke kalder!

Jessica (i vendt)

Hjem, nu he for Dine Søn!

Lorenzo

Jessica, din lykke kalder —

Jessica

Os te lyken vil i gør.

Lorenzo

Kom, vis Deag, min Fakkelbane!

Jessica (står ud) fordelt som corn.

Sikte De Fakkel! Pøjel min Han!

Lorenzo

Nej, min Pøjel ej Bojder.

Jessica

Jo, jeg sørger i min Han.

Lorenzo

Kom, de tære aften læng —

hastig men men vor Glæde!
JESSICA (ræber hen af Nini)

Hør, der bøller i byen!
— gleden men dal vor kærlig!
(C. med: SIVEN, LANGE og GEHNING)

GEHNING (Lang-firved)

Vennu, lad Lassen 97-er
je i hærskæg af liv!
Nem al Bahnsen, som synger,
Faderen skal gøre Livet.

Alt disse stille. Soven står og græler liden.
Studer og ser i en skyld.
Slyvlod lurer også i hætter lidt.
Kære af min tilhænger. Fyldte sig i liv og Dør.

Slyvlod (sbiige)

Min Datter!
Min Dikker!
Min Datter røde!
Ind med en Kristen,
Ind med det Fjort!
Fordøj, fordøj!
Raktadiser!
Stor dam!
Stop, Tyve! Stop med Datter!
Stop, uop Dikker!
So bor og Dikker!

Kor

Haer Doller - haer Aalker -
Aalkeen og den Doller!
Aalkeelakeha!
Aalke! vi dir af Doller!

Skyld (rasen inden de)

Med grinde V - og gale!
Giv tvangs for dem! Der gange!
Relfog er!
Lov! i fide dem!
Lov! troj fide dem!
Giv mig den Doller, id of mig mit Gist!
Staf mig mine juveler!
Gis hon dem, død de for min Gist
med Tener: dit Ar
og Dekalen i din Kirk!

Rapponl'er!
Lov!
Dekalen,
Mii Doller!
Mii Doller!

(Lober uor Boren, føigt af de lybet y pilek

מניה)

Tappend.
A B S T R A C T
In addition to the two finished operas of Nielsen, scattered sources show that throughout his life he had at least five other opera projects in mind, which for various reasons were given up at different stages in their progress. The article presents the sources that are available for these projects, comprising the following works: Judith, Psycke, The Silent Woman, Portia, and Fru Marie Grubbe. The focus of the article is on Nielsen’s plan to compose an opera based on Shakespeare’s The Merchant of Venice under the working title Portia. Two important manuscripts in the Royal Library show that Nielsen himself had worked out a complete synopsis for the opera, and that the librettist, Sophus Michaëlis, had made a full text of the first act. A comparison of the two manuscripts and Shakespeare’s play reveals that the opera would have been quite different from the model with its focus on the character of Portia and the leaving out the merchant Antonio. Nielsen apparently gave up the idea, and no music from the work in progress worth mentioning is known.