
CARL NIELSEN STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

This volume of *Carl Nielsen Studies* follows some six years after its predecessor and is largely based on papers presented at the *Carl Nielsen Studies* international conference held at the University of Newcastle in September 2021. The time-lag between the conference and publication is regrettable but in no way the fault of the contributors, for whose patience the editors are profoundly grateful. The knock-on effects of Covid are partly responsible, but even more so are life and career developments – positive but challenging – within the editorial team.

In the Editorial to *Carl Nielsen Studies* Volume 6, I noted the ‘conspicuous absence... [of] any contribution founded principally on musical analysis’. This lacuna is now squarely addressed in the present volume with seven articles that illuminate the power of Nielsen’s music mainly or wholly from a technical point of view. Such is the individuality of Nielsen’s compositional voice that his larger-scale works evade the clutches of any single theory. Yet they convey a compelling sense of direction and purpose – always in motion, except for moments when that motion is temporarily suspended for a higher dramatic purpose. It follows that analytical commentary that seeks to get to the essence of his music needs to take what it can from diverse theoretical perspectives.

Taken together, the articles in *Carl Nielsen Studies* Volume 7 train analytical light on fundamental aspects of Nielsen’s large-scale works: what one might call Image and Process, or in other words highly-charged musical materials and drama-infused processes. How these aspects work together and to what end are eternal sources of fascination. The first task of analysis – much like the analysis of chemical compounds – is to separate out the elements and examine them forensically, one at a time. From this, investigation of the reaction and inter-action of those elements can follow.

In this volume, Christopher Tarrant applies the relatively recently emerged theory of Galant schemata to the slow movement of Nielsen’s First Symphony. Svend Hvidfeldt Nielsen re-examines the first movement of the *Sinfonia espansiva* – a quintessence of Nielsen’s ‘energetic’ style – in the light of the theories of Hans Mersmann.

Taking *The Inextinguishable* as his case study, Julian Horton assesses its credentials with respect to ‘two-dimensional’ sonata form and ‘orbital tonality’. Thomas Husted Kirkegaard re-considers contradictory and complementary aspects of ‘organicism’ – a favourite Nielsenesque concept – in the theories of Hugo Riemann and Heinrich Schenker, with particular regard to the ‘Præludium’ to the last movement of the Wind Quintet. I myself focus on Nielsen’s habitual use of repeated-note patterns through his six symphonies – admittedly a project that is as much observational as it is analytical – in the context of the influence of Beethoven but in the interests of drawing out an important aspect of Nielsen’s unique tone of voice.

Both Galant schemata and repeated notes relate to the theory of musical ‘topics’ – the highly-charged materials with which Nielsen operates – as elaborated in Western theory since the early 1980s. Topics also feature, alongside two-dimensional (or double-function) form and ‘balanced opposites’, in Owen Burton’s consideration of how Nielsen handles programme and structure in *Pan and Syrinx*, one of the most fascinating of his tone poems. In a broader sense, ‘Dreamscapes’ are another recurring topic in Nielsen’s music, as examined in Daniel Grimley’s wide-ranging contextualisation.

Broadening the lens still further, Michael Fjeldsøe considers ‘Nielsen as a European composer’, reflecting on the research he and his colleagues Katarina Smitt Engberg and Bjarke Moe carried out, culminating in the publication of their prize-winning book, *Carl Nielsen: A Cultural Biography*, in 2024 (English version 2025), which will be reviewed in *Carl Nielsen Studies* 8.

The Reviews section highlights two recent CD issues that draw on radio archives and recently discovered sources.

The Reports section covers two major recent developments in Nielsen research: the establishment of a new Research Centre at Odense Museum, headed by Michael Fjeldsøe, and the appearance of the complete Nielsen correspondence in English (including news of the composer’s recently de-classified private letters, which will be assessed in *Carl Nielsen Studies* Volume 8). In addition, Eva Hvidt reports on the Nielsen couple’s home in Frederiksholms Kanal, of which she gave a guided tour to delegates during the April 2022 ‘Nielsen – European Composer’ conference at the University of Copenhagen, and which it is hoped may one day be open to the public.

Editorial work on this volume has benefitted greatly from the input of Michael Fjeldsøe, who will assume the role of Editor-in-Chief for future volumes. I have been privileged to fulfil this role for Volumes 6 and 7 of *Carl Nielsen Studies*, at a time when withdrawal of support from the Royal Library had placed the continuation of the series in jeopardy. I still intend to play an active part on the editorial team for future volumes. But it is only natural that the publication should now return to Denmark.

Once again, the editors thank the Royal Library for continuing to host the journal in its online form.

Plans for Volumes 8 and 9 of *Carl Nielsen Studies* are already in hand. Volume 8 will be based on papers given at the 2022 Copenhagen conference, while Volume 9 will feature contributions to the conference planned for Odense in October 2026. Contributions to these volumes are also welcome from those other than conference delegates. Papers or abstracts may be sent to Michael Fjeldsøe at mfj@museumodense.dk or myself at david.fanning@manchester.ac.uk.

David Fanning