The Influence of Composers Wilhelm Peterson-Berger and Wilhelm Stenhammar on Swedish National Romanticism

Armen Shaomian
University of Miami, armen@miami.edu

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THE INFLUENCE OF COMPOSERS WILHELM PETERSON-BERGER AND
WILHELM STENHAMMAR ON SWEDISH NATIONAL ROMANTICISM

By

Armen Shaomian

A LECTURE RECITAL ESSAY

Submitted to the Faculty
of the University of Miami
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

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A lecture recital essay submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts

THE INFLUENCE OF COMPOSERS WILHELM PETERSON-BERGER AND
WILHELM STENHAMMAR ON SWEDISH NATIONAL ROMANTICISM

Armen Shaomian

Approved:

Dr. Paul Posnak
Professor of Accompanying

Dr. Terri A. Scandura
Dean of the Graduate School

Prof. Ross Harbaugh
Professor of String Performance

Dr. Rosalina G. Sackstein
Professor of Keyboard Performance

Dr. Paul F. Wilson
Professor of Music Theory and Composition
The objective of my lecture recital is to introduce the music of the National Romantic period in Swedish cultural history to a wider audience. The period of National Romanticism was in many ways the promotion of folk-influenced music, art, and architecture throughout the late 1800’s until the early 1900’s, the beginning of realism. Composers and painters honored the beautiful landscape and rural environments as well as portraying their patriotism through their art, mainly as a reaction against industrialism. Many museums and public parks were built as a result of the National Romantic movement in Sweden. My lecture recital will highlight the two main composers of the period, Wilhelm Peterson-Berger and Wilhelm Stenhammar, who were the driving forces in absorbing and encouraging folklore, helping advance the patriotic arts of Swedish history.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION
Background

This lecture recital will consist of musical performance, both solo piano and chamber music, in conjunction with a PowerPoint presentation which will give the audience a brief background about the two main composers of Swedish National Romanticism and the musical connections that they have with each other. My goal is to define and illustrate National Romanticism and to extract from each composer’s large body of works the characteristics of their folk-music influences. What makes the National-Romantic music of Sweden so "Swedish" is its use of folkloric melodies derived from generations of folk music and the influence of folk myths. Swedish folklore has its roots and influences in troubadour music, vocal songs such as the air or the folk ballad, festival and celebratory music, and the revised Lutheran psalms, (the state religion in Sweden has always been Lutheran). By making visual and harmonic comparisons between folk songs and the folkloric melodies of contemporaries to the two foremost composers of the National-Romantic period, a conclusion can be made that National-Romantic music is "Swedish-sounding" primarily due to the incorporation of folk harmonies, melodies and dance rhythms in their specific modal settings. In order to present the topic within the scope of a single lecture recital, the works I have chosen to perform will be limited to individual movements of complete works, and songs from a large song cycle, and a few shorter musical examples.
Welcome to a lecture recital on the subject of Swedish National-Romantic music. Many of you are probably familiar with the music of the great Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg. Grieg’s music was very characteristic of the sounds of Scandinavian music in general, using modal-influenced melodies. Similar to Grieg in Norway, Swedish composers gave rise to what has officially become known as "National Romanticism" in Swedish cultural history. This musical development was part of a larger movement in Swedish art. "National Romanticism", a term widely used in Swedish art in general, refers to an intellectual and esthetic movement during the mid-to-late nineteenth century through the beginning of the 20th century.¹ During this time, Sweden, like the rest of Europe, was going through an immense transformation from an agrarian economy to a society driven by industrialization. Fearing that these changes would threaten the Scandinavian heritage that Sweden had developed for generations with its neighbors, many artists were patriotically influenced, feeling an increasing need to return to the roots of their Swedish identity. Similar movements, though not as vivid, were in motion in the rest of the Scandinavian countries. There are many similarities between the Norwegian and Swedish nationalistic movements for several reasons. The languages are nearly identical and there existed a pan-nationalism, also known as pan-Scandinavism, shared by the two nations due to the fact that there was a union of kingdoms between Sweden and Norway dating back to 1814. They were a pan-union

under one monarch, King Charles XIII of Sweden.\textsuperscript{2} This union lasted until the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century, allowing many inter-cultural ideas and traditions to harmonize, though not always on friendly terms.

Example 1.1. Map of Sweden-Norway Union in 1847.\textsuperscript{3}

Many Norwegians were becoming wary of the influence that Sweden was having on their nationalism and eventually, the union was broken, although on peaceful terms.

With this lecture recital, my intent is to perform for you some of the music of the two composers that were central figures in the National-Romantic movement. I chose these two composers as the subject of this lecture recital due to their stature, their involvement in the advancement of Swedish piano literature, and their academic contributions to the


many musical institutions in Sweden. You will hear a little bit about the lives and careers of Wilhelm Peterson-Berger and Wilhelm Stenhammar, including performances of some of their works.

Several composers led this nationalistic movement. The two composers that I will speak about today were the leaders of the movement for a national identity in Swedish music. I will give you a brief background about each composer, perform some of their music, and illustrate how Swedish folkloric elements are present in their music.

Example 1.2. Map of Scandinavia today.  

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Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, born in 1867, received his graduate degree in organ performance and composition at the Music Conservatory in Stockholm.  

Example 2.1. Picture of Wilhelm Peterson-Berger. (1894)

Arnljot and the Frösö rune stone

Like most Swedish musicians at the time, he did post-graduate work at the Music University of Dresden. Mainly influenced by the music of Grieg and Wagner, Peterson-

---


Berger settled in Stockholm after his studies and composed five symphonies, the opera *Arnljot*, and many piano compositions. *Arnljot*, his largest work, was based on a folk-story originally compiled by Snorre Sturlasson and Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (scholars similar to the brothers Grimm). The libretto is based on the legendary Viking *Arnljot Gelline* and the text from the northernmost rune stone in Sweden, the Frösö stone, which also contains the longest text of any rune stone in Swedish history.

Example 2.2. Pictures of the Frösö rune stone.\(^7\)

Due to the fact that Peterson-Berger based his opera on the text from the rune stone, one of the most important national historic artifacts in Sweden, it quickly became known as Sweden’s "national opera." The translation of the early-Swedish text on the stone talks about the fact that the state of Jämtland was an "independent and self-ruled peasant republic until the kings of Norway and Sweden decided to unite the two

landscapes and to introduce the new teaching – Christianity." It further states that "The Norwegian king Olav Haraldsson marched through Jämtland in the year 1030 to try to regain his kingdom, but fell in battle in the city of Stikle. Shortly thereafter, he was sainted as "Olav the Holy", and Christianity was quickly accepted in all of Norway. Considering the close relationship that the "Jämtars" (people of Jämtland) enjoy with Trøndelag (Norwegian law/rule), it (Christianity) shall probably become established within a generation."⁸ 


Arnljot is performed on an annual basis at a popular summer festival in Sweden at Frösö Island, where the composer wrote this great work. For years, Peterson-Berger himself directed and held the rehearsals during the summers and had an integral part in the staging of the opera.⁹

Example 2.3. Picture of Peterson-Berger directing the cast of *Arnljot*\(^{10}\)

**The Frösöblomster collection and his career**

Seeking refuge on the island of Frösö away from his busy life in Stockholm, where he had built his residence and could seclude himself to compose, Peterson-Berger dedicated a collection of piano works to Frösö, entitled *Frösöblomster (The Flowers of Frösö)*. He named his home "Sommarhagen" (Summer pasture) which later became his permanent place of residence.\(^{11}\)

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Example 2.4. Picture of his home "Sommarhagen" on Frösö island.\textsuperscript{12}

Example 2.5. Peterson-Berger writing in his study.\textsuperscript{13}


\textsuperscript{13} Hedwall, Lennart. \textit{Wilhelm Peterson-Berger: En Bildbiografi}, Skelleftehamn: Norrlandsförlaget, 1983, p. 28
Example 2.6. Peterson-Berger’s "music-room" at Sommarhagen.\textsuperscript{14}

The Frösöblomster pieces were composed as Romanser (Romances), the Nordic equivalent of the German Lieder. There is certainly an influence of Edvard Grieg’s Lyrical Pieces and one can glimpse other composers such as Schumann in his music. With his clearly defined style, expressive melodies and folkloric harmonies, Peterson-Berger’s idiosyncratic and flexible tunes were truly in the spirit of National Romanticism. Peterson-Berger was a true exponent of folk-influenced Scandinavian music, which he developed early on in his career with a very personal style. It was probably also one of the biggest reasons for his career’s success. With his biggest influences being those from Beethoven and Wagner as well as Edvard Grieg, he used folk music as a foreground. Peterson-Berger built an entire artistic philosophy mainly based on the idea that his music

was "reality based", which meant a movement against, in his own words, "superficial composing" and advocated a "truth seeking, research based and explorative excitement." In other words, he was more or less against what was the "popular music" of his time.\textsuperscript{15}

In his professional life, Peterson-Berger was a well-known writer of a different sort, as the music critic for the Swedish daily news \textit{Dagens Nyheter}. He often "attacked" Wilhelm Stenhammar, a composer whom many identified as having the same stylistic characteristics as Peterson-Berger himself. While he was a great fan of Richard Wagner and Friedrich Nietzsche, he was also criticized by the German government for speaking out against the Nazi movement that was gaining momentum at the time. He translated several of Wagner’s essays and published them in the newspaper,\textsuperscript{16} the largest national newspaper in Scandinavia.

Wilhelm Peterson-Berger’s \textit{Frösöblomster} became his most successful and most frequently performed pieces, part of the standard Swedish repertoire.\textsuperscript{17} The first collection, composed in 1896, includes eight pieces, all drawing upon his experiences of the sights and sounds of the Swedish countryside. The second collection was completed four years later with six pieces, and the third one in 1914 with another seven pieces. In total, this three-volume collection of twenty-one pieces were all composed at his home on Frösö island and are seen as examples of Swedish national-romantic music that is closely

\begin{footnotes}
\item[17] Andrew Smith, program notes to Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, \textit{Flowers from Frösö Island – Melodies, Humoresques and Idylls for Piano}, performed by Niklas Sivelöv, piano [USA]: Naxos, 8.554343, 1998, p. 2
\end{footnotes}
associated with nature and the famous Swedish bright summer evenings. The pieces are rooted in the folk-music idiom and have very descriptive titles. It is important to realize that Swedish culture and folk-tradition is a subject deeply rooted in the environment and natural landscape of Sweden. A majority of Swedish repertoire, folk or classical, has some sort of title or connection to nature. Peterson-Berger himself was an avid hiker and spent his summers hiking in the mountains, always carrying a notebook and some manuscript paper. He was acquainted with the various types of wildflowers, trees and animals that he would encounter during his outdoor activities and would generally draft melodies before going home to work on the pieces.18 Similar to a musical diary, he would sing his pieces for his fellow hikers, giving them a first glimpse, in the mountain sunshine under the open skies. Out of the twenty-one pieces of Frösöblomster, only four titles are not directly derived from the landscape or environment. Examples of some of the titles are At Dawn, Sun salute, Far away in the forests, Waves against the sand, Landscape in the evening sun, Under the aspen trees, Lawn Tennis and The wilderness entices. The pieces represent the romantic, nationalistic and typical Swedish musical mindset that was prevalent during the turn of the century.19 I have chosen six of my favorites to perform for you. There are certain laments and characteristics that I would like you to listen for while you hear these pieces.

18 Andrew Smith, program notes to Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, Flowers from Frösö Island – Melodies, Humoresques and Idylls for Piano, performed by Niklas Sivelöv, piano [USA]: Naxos, 8.554343, 1998, p. 2

19 Ibid., p. 3
Sommarsång (Summer Song) Op. 16 No. 2

In Sommarsång (Summer Song), one of the most famous of the Frösöblomster, the music depicts the warm, calm and bright pre-summer evenings in Sweden where the sun barely goes down in the midsummer, particularly in the northern part of Sweden where Peterson-Berger lived. Wandering about in nature" under the open sky, Summer Song was actually one of the big breakthroughs for Peterson-Berger, most likely because it was a simple lyrical piece with harmonies that were easily recognized and accessible to a larger audience. It is known to almost every Swede, and the majority of piano students in Scandinavia have played this piece or are familiar with it.

Gratulation (Congratulation) Op. 16 No. 5

The second piece I will perform for you is Gratulation (Congratulation). It is a bright, uplifting, dance-like piece, displaying the typical harmonic structure that Peterson-Berger used frequently. Though it sounds a bit like a marching tune, it draws more parallels to an elegant Gavotte with a Musette as a middle section. Extensive use of melodic thirds in both the accompaniment and the melody appear in this piece, which has been called a "Carl Larsson painting in music", comparing it to the famous Swedish painter known for depicting nature and the outdoors in his many watercolor paintings.

20 Andrew Smith, program notes to Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, Flowers from Frösö Island – Melodies, Humoresques and Idylls for Piano, performed by Niklas Sivelöv, piano [USA]: Naxos, 8.554343, 1998, p. 4

21 Ibid.
I Skymningen (At Dusk) Op. 16 No. 7, and the Troll Mythology

The third piece is also from Book I of Frösö Flowers. *I Skymningen (At dusk)* in D minor, has a fast paced accompaniment, borrowing from a similar accompaniment in Grieg’s *Trolltag (March of the dwarfs)*, also set in D minor. The similarities are striking when comparing the two "troll" pieces. Perhaps there is a sentiment or an established idea of what troll music is supposed to sound like? Both of the pieces are set in D minor in A B A format. The idea of the "trolls pacing" is emphasized in the left hand staccato broken fifths, while the right hand demonstrates a quick "hiding" or "you can’t catch me" (thirty-second notes in the Grieg and eighth-notes in the Peterson-Berger). I will play a few measures of each piece to give you a better idea of the similarities. The pieces start in a disquieting mood in D minor, with a cautious melodic buildup, followed by a very lyrical and melodically solemn trio in the major key.

Example 2.7. *Trolltag (March of the Dwarfs)*, Op. 54 No 3, Edvard Grieg

MM: 1 – 12 (Opening section)

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Example 2.8. *I Skymningen* (At dusk), Peterson-Berger\textsuperscript{23}
MM: 1-23 (Opening section)

The cheerful B sections of both pieces are in D major. Depicting the soothing sunrays at dusk, the melodic calmness of the piece does not last long as it quickly reverts back to the original driven tempo and minor key opening section.

Example 2.9. *Trolltag* (March of the Dwarfs), Op. 54 No 3, Edvard Grieg\textsuperscript{24}
MM: 71 - 83 (B section opening)

\textsuperscript{23} Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, *Frösöblomster III*, Danderyd: Abraham Lundquist AB Musikförlag, 1914, p. 10

\textsuperscript{24} Edvard Grieg, *Complete Lyric Pieces*, G. Schirmer, Inc, 1995, p. 75
Trolls were prevalent in Norse mythology and were a very common theme in Scandinavian folklore. There are numerous songs, dances, musical games and stories about trolls in the pan-Scandinavian culture. The Nordic equivalents of humanoid mini-monsters, they are somewhat similar to the English ogres. Known to live in underground holes, caves or mounds, trolls were generally seen at dusk in the old folk-tales. Any exposure to sunlight would turn the trolls into stone. This piece manifests the folk myth of trolls in the forests roaming at night. Ultimately, the A section illustrates the trolls lively activities, followed by a lyrical B section that paints a wonderful picture of the dawn. This acts as a warning to the trolls that they need to finish their chores before the sun comes up, returning back to the A section where the listener can imagine the trolls quickly running back to their underground hiding places.

Example 2.11. Picture of Swedish trolls by John Bauer.\textsuperscript{26}

Example 2.12. Picture of "Troll crossing" road sign in Scandinavia.\textsuperscript{27}


\textsuperscript{27}Um Die Welt, 2006, Ilona Fallaschek. "Reisebericht: Reise zum Nordkap " [on-line]; available from http://www.umdiewelt.de/Europa/Nordeuropa-oder-Skandinavien/Norwegen/Reisebericht-959/Kapitel-
Intåg i Sommarhagen (Entrance to Sommarhagen) Book 3 No. 2

The next piece in the group is also one of Peterson-Berger’s most famous piano pieces. From the third book of the collection, Intåg i Sommarhagen (Entrance to Sommarhagen) was composed in 1914, in homage to his summer home on Frösö. It was in the same year that he finally moved into his dream home on the island. It was "a dream come true" for Peterson-Berger. He had seen the island back in 1889 and had fallen in love with its surroundings, greenery and peacefulness. It took him several years to have his summer home built, and once he was able to move there, he started composing diligently from his studio overlooking the shore. The view from his studio gave rise to many lyrical pieces and this march is one of them. The piece is performed widely in Sweden, especially as a postlude to many wedding ceremonies. Again, the energetic spirit and the rhythmic emphasis are similar to the Lyric Pieces by Grieg. We can compare this piece to Grieg’s Wedding Day at Troldhaugen. Throughout the piece, the downbeat of each measure receives a full quarter note value, while the rest of the beats are in staccato eights, on the "upward" motion. This creates the feeling of a slow-paced march, supporting a brisk melody. The opening section resembles that of a trumpet catching the listener’s attention, as if informing us that "here comes something important – listen up!"

29 Ibid.
Example 2.13. *Intåg i Sommarhagen* (Entrance to Sommarhagen), Book 3 No. 2, Peterson-Berger\(^{30}\)*  
MM: 1-25 (Opening statement)

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**Folkhumor (Folk humor) Book 3 No. 4, and the Swedish *Polska***

The fifth piece I have chosen to perform is named *Folkhumor (Folk humor)*. It is an animated dance set in a typical Swedish folkdance rhythm called a *polska*, which derives from the *polka* – Polish dance. The *polska* is and has been an extremely popular folkdance in Sweden for over 400 years.\(^{31}\) The roots of the *polska* are often traced back to the influence of the Polish Court throughout the northern countries during the early 1600’s. This view is sometimes challenged by those who see earlier evidence of the musical tradition in Nordic *visor*, or *songs*, which may have become grafted onto the newer foreign influences when the court dances began to filter out into the middle class.

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and rural communities.\textsuperscript{32} In Sweden, \textit{polska} dances have been a continuous music tradition, meaning the tunes and the styles of the dances were passed down through families and neighbors.\textsuperscript{33} This was such a popular dance form, varying greatly from region to region, that many archivists actually traveled throughout Sweden transcribing and annotating the variations. However, most of the regional \textit{polskas}, particularly those in the small villages, disappeared entirely during the 1900’s due to the industrial revolution. Most \textit{polska} forms today survive through aural and visual tradition. The popularity of the dance has lived on, and many more varieties have blossomed, especially in the northern regions of Sweden, where the dance varies greatly in both rhythmic emphasis as well as melodic composition.\textsuperscript{34} The \textit{polska} is danced in pairs rather than in groups and first became popular during the fifteenth century in Poland, which was a major power in Europe at that time. During the next century, Poland had a strong cultural influence in Sweden, mainly because the King at that time, Sigismund III Vasa, had a Swedish-Polish background.\textsuperscript{35} He was the King of Poland for several decades before the Swedish-Latvian-Polish union treaty, and subsequently moved to Sweden and took the Crown in 1593 as he became the ruler of the union. King Vasa was an admirer of the \textit{polska}, and it was frequently performed in his court. This new, revolutionary dance form became established in Sweden as a folk dance and is still very popular several centuries later. Even though it is a dance form played in \(\frac{3}{4}\) time, it is not a waltz, a dance more


\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.

common amongst the wealthy and aristocratic populace.\textsuperscript{36} The \textit{polska} was the dance of the people, old and young, poor or poorer. It was danced with heavy steps by clog-shoe wearing farmers and most certainly during happy celebrations, especially during the Swedish mid-summer festivities. Although the \textit{polska} belongs to the same musical category of dances as schottisches, mazurkas and wedding marches, there are many different variations of the same dance form in Sweden.\textsuperscript{37} What sets them apart from a waltz is the rhythmic emphasis in the measure. A waltz, as you know, has three beats per measure, with the first beat being the emphasized downbeat, while the following two are in upward motions and much lighter.

\begin{center}
\textbf{WALTZ:} / \textsuperscript{1} \textsuperscript{2} \textsuperscript{3} \textsuperscript{1} \textsuperscript{2} \textsuperscript{3} \\
Down Up Up Down Up Up Down Up Up
\end{center}

In a \textit{polska}, the heavy beats are the 1\textsuperscript{st} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} beat, while the 2\textsuperscript{nd} beat, the light beat has an upward motion:

\begin{center}
\textbf{POLSKA:} / \textsuperscript{1} \textsuperscript{2} \textsuperscript{3} \textsuperscript{2} \textsuperscript{2} \textsuperscript{2} \textsuperscript{2} \textsuperscript{2} \\
Down Up Down Down Up Down Down Up Down
\end{center}

Example 2.14. Waltz and \textit{Polska} rhythm comparison.

The \textit{polska} dance music has Scandinavian influence as well, with musical ideas dating back as far as the Viking and Medieval age. This is mainly noticed in the left hand accompaniment of \textit{Folkhumor}. As explained in the essay "Authentic Viking Music":

One singer carries the melody, while the next singer matches the first, in parallel fourths or fifths. Subsequent singers, as ability allows, match one of these two,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{36} Bull and Sandved, \textit{Musiklexikon del 2 L-Ö}, p. 1701
  \item \textsuperscript{37} Andrew Smith, program notes to Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, \textit{Flowers from Frösö Island – Melodies, Humoresques and Idylls for Piano}, performed by Niklas Sivelöv, piano [USA]: Naxos, 8.554343, 1998 p. 9
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
either an octave up or down, producing a spine-chilling blend of parallel fourths and fifths.38

The fourths and fifths are prevalent throughout the left hand accompaniment of *Folkhumor*, specifically in the dance rhythm as described earlier. A fifth was the entire range of Viking Age song39. The earliest piece of Viking music ever found is a simple tune by the name of *Drømde mig en drøm i nat* (I dreamt a dream last night) dating back to c. 1300.40 It was discovered in a vellum manuscript that contains early Danish law texts, specifically the *Skånske lov*, or Scanian law (Skånske being the southernmost region in Sweden that shares its border with Denmark.) The tune will be demonstrated on the lyre from a recording. Listen for the fifths in the bass that accompany the melody along with the dance rhythm.

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Example 2.15. Pictures of original leaf of *Drømde mig en droma i nat.*
(I dreamt a dream last night) c. 1300, and modern notation

Example 2.16. *Folkhumor (Folk Humor)*, Peterson-Berger
MM: 1-14 (opening statement)

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Example 2.17. *Folkhumor (Folk Humor)*, Peterson-Berger\(^{43}\)

MM: 43-60 (B section)

Today, there are hundreds of *polska* variations, but there are three basic styles of music for the Swedish form, depending on the region of Sweden.\(^{44}\) In southern Sweden, the *semiquaver* or *sixteenth-note polska* can be found, which is generally in a smooth and even rhythmic form. In the Swedish Midwest, the *quaver* or *eighth-note polska* is the more common version, in which the dancers match each other’s steps only on the first and third beat as they turn clockwise, alternating in a resting step, the second beat.\(^{45}\) The third general form of *polska* can be found in the northwestern part of Sweden, mainly in the state of Jämtland where Peterson-Berger’s Frösö is located and where he lived. In the

\(^{43}\) Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, *Frösöblomster III*, p. 11


\(^{45}\) Ibid.
*Jämtland polska*, the triplet form is the prevalent dance style.\(^{46}\) This shows strong cross-border influences between Norway and Sweden, as they also share this triplet *polska*.

*Folkhumor* is based on this common folkdance rhythm, specifically the *Jämtland polska*.

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Example 2.18. *Midsommardansen (Midsummer dance)*, Anders Zorn (1897)\(^{47}\)

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Example 2.19. *Dans i Gopsmor (Dance in Gopsmor)*, Anders Zorn (1906)\(^{48}\)

Example 2.20. *Polska after Mans Olsson.* (trad. Jämtland)\(^49\)

**Polska efter Måns Olsson**

\[\text{Trad. (Jämtland)}\]

In typical fashion, the *polska* is set in a minor key, as are most Swedish dances. "In Swedish folk-music", Peterson-Berger always said "one is happiest in the minor."\(^50\)

"Western ears" are generally used to hearing major keys as "happy keys" and minor ones as "sad," but in the Scandinavian folk-dance norm, the keys are generally more modal, and minor is more prevalent. In fact, a majority of the pieces representative of Scandinavian National Romanticism are in minor.

**Om Många År (In Many Years) Book 3 No. 7**

The last piece of this collection is a pensive and nostalgic composition called *Om många år* *(In many years)*. This reflective tune is the final composition of the *Frösö flowers* collection. Rather than ending his collection of lyrical pieces with a fast-paced

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\(^50\) Andrew Smith, program notes to Wilhelm Peterson-Berger, *Flowers from Frösö Island – Melodies, Humoresques and Idylls for Piano*, performed by Niklas Sivelöv, piano [USA]: Naxos, 8.554343, 1998 p. 4
virtuosic piece, Peterson-Berger ends it with this very somber and sentimental nocturne set in E minor, sounding almost regretful, reflecting on all things transient in life. Wilhelm Peterson-Berger passed away on December 3rd, 1942. As he lay in the hospital bed on the mainland, he had a view from his room overlooking the shores of his beloved Frösö island.

Example 2.21. Picture of Peterson-Berger looking out from his beloved Sommarhagen.51

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Chapter 3  
WILHELM STENHAMMAR (1871-1927)  

Background  

Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871-1927) also completed his musical studies in Stockholm, studying under Richard Andersson, a student of Clara Schumann. Undoubtedly Sweden’s most well-known composer and pianist, Wilhelm was brought up in a strictly religious and musical home; his father was the famous architect and composer Per Ulrik Stenhammar.\(^{52}\) Per Ulrik, who never received any formal musical training, nevertheless was significantly influenced by Swedish folk music, and Stenhammar was affected early on by his father’s love for folkloric music and traditions. His father composed several church arias and an oratorio, as well as a "Fall Hymn" for choir. Professionally, he designed the famous Ersta chapel in Stockholm and many other churches in the country. The profound influence that Stenhammar’s father’s music had on him inspired him to study music and pursue it as a career. His father was not very supportive of Wilhelm studying music. It was not until after his fathers’ death when Wilhelm was sixteen years old, that he started to take piano lessons. After completing his musical studies in Sweden, he moved to Berlin for further studies, where he became an avid admirer of the music of Bruckner and Wagner. Many parallels can be drawn between Stenhammar and Franz Liszt: Stenhammar became the most sought-after pianist in Sweden during his lifetime, performing widely and frequently.\(^{53}\) He premiered Brahms's First Piano Concerto when he himself made his concert début at age 21. The


\(^{53}\) Ibid., p. 1971
following year, 1893, he produced and premiered his own Piano Concerto No.1 - with the Berlin Symphony Orchestra. By now, he had made a good name for himself and the concert was conducted by no less than Richard Strauss.\textsuperscript{54}

Example 3.1. Picture of Wilhelm Stenhammar.\textsuperscript{55}

After his return to Sweden, Stenhammar became the Artistic Director and chief conductor of the Gothenburg Orchestra, the first full-time professional Swedish symphony. Its rival was the National Stockholm Orchestra, which only performed sporadically at that time and with which Stenhammar was featured during their inaugural

\textsuperscript{54} Semmy Stålhammer, program notes to \textit{Svenskt Sekelskifte/Swedish Turn of the Century 1900}, performed by Semmy Stålhammer, violin, Love Derwinger, piano and Elisabeth Boström, piano [Sweden]: Nosag Records, nosag CD 4049, 1997, p. 5

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., p. 59
concert in 1902. He later moved to Stockholm, becoming the Director of Music at the Stockholm Opera, and received membership to the Royal Academy of Music in 1900.  

**The Poetic *Edda* and Norse Mythology**

Stenhammar observed the profound influence that the *Edda*, a collection of old Norse poems from Scandinavia, had on Richard Wagner. The *Edda* told the archetypical stories of Norse mythology with its feuding anthropomorphic deities, stories that were passed on from singer to singer and from poet to poet for centuries. He became similarly immersed in the music of two Nordic composers, fellow Scandinavians Jean Sibelius and Carl Nielsen. He started to include Swedish folklore in some of his compositions and a more fully "folk harmonic" tone, characterized by modal scales that evoke the village life in Scandinavia, in comparison to his previously more "Classical" compositions. Themes that always played an important role in Stenhammar’s compositions were nature as the important force in life’s cycle, especially with the sea, as well as mankind’s involvement in the cycles of the earth. His musical esthetic was always tied to that of Schubert’s *Lieder*, and to late Romantic music in general.

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59 Semmy Stålhammer, program notes to *Svenskt Sekelskifte/Swedish Turn of the Century 1900*, performed by Semmy Stålhammer, violin, Love Derwinger, piano and Elisabeth Boströmng, piano [Sweden]: Nosag Records, nosag CD 4049, 1997, p. 5
Stenhammar’s Career and the influence of National Romanticism

In summarizing Stenhammar’s contribution to National-Romanticism, several compositional techniques need to be identified. Stenhammar’s use of folk motifs in his works, directly and indirectly, is the main element of his immense success during his lifetime. He frequently gave sold-out performances as a pianist all over the Nordic countries as well as in Germany. However, it is also important to note that Stenhammar’s legacy in the National-Romantic spectrum differs from that of Peterson-Berger. Stenhammar did not directly reference folk-dance rhythms or imitate instrumental sounds as Peterson-Berger frequently did. In fact, his music does not always reflect a typical Scandinavian style such as Peterson-Berger’s or Grieg’s. Instead, his idea of folk-influenced components in his compositions came from the literary world of national identity, deriving from the Swedish language itself. Perhaps it was the child-hood influence of his father, the famous architect and hymn composer as mentioned before, that had sparked such interest in literature. It was during Stenhammar’s lifetime that the nationalization of the Swedish language took place, absorbing the many dialects into a national one. In his vocal music, Stenhammar showed a great deal of interest in Swedish poetry. He wrote numerous songs and choral works based on texts by two major poets who had reached near national hero status, one in Sweden and the other in Finland. I will speak about the two poets shortly. One of the reasons for Stenhammar’s success was his widely popular song cycles, which displayed his superb taste in literature and an exceptional ability to express the poetry
effectively\textsuperscript{60} through his music. Examples are vocal works such as the hymn called \textit{Sverige} (Sweden) from his cantata \textit{Ett Folk} (One People), which has attained the status of a second national anthem, as well as a song cycle depicting Swedish society: \textit{Folket} (The People), \textit{Medborgar Sång} (Citizen Song), \textit{Röst Sedeln} (The Ballot) and \textit{Soldat Sång} (Soldier’s Song)\textsuperscript{61}. Stenhammar also completed two dramatic operas that reached audience success in Sweden as well as in Germany. Both operas reflect the influences of Wagner and Bruckner than Swedish folk-music. However, there were certain elements that would identify him as a Scandinavian composer. One was the contrarian idea of a major key as the somber setting and minor as its happy mood. This technique was not rare in the National-Romantic period, as noted earlier in several of Peterson-Berger’s works.

Overall, Stenhammar made a very important contribution to Swedish music. Throughout his career, he received great acclaim for his two piano concertos and for his Swedish song repertoire, including his works for choir. He set music to some of the most beloved poems in Sweden. When the songs from his song cycles are performed, I encourage you to listen to the way Stenhammar treats the human voice and the Swedish language. He is always exploring ways in which to merge the piano part with the vocal line rather than treat it as an accompaniment.

\textsuperscript{60} Bo Wallner and Roger Tanner, program notes to Wilhelm Stenhammar, \textit{Sånger/Songs}, performed by Anne Sofie von Otter, mezzosoprano and Bengt Forsberg, piano [England]: Musica Sveciae, MSCD 623, 1989, p. 20

Johan Ludvig Runeberg

Johan Runeberg was a Finnish poet, born in 1804 into a poor Swedish-speaking family in Finland, where Swedish has always been one of the two official languages. Runeberg studied Swedish and grammar at the University of Åbo-Turku, where he became inspired by Romantic nationalism. He became a private tutor on an estate in the heart of the Finnish countryside, where he came to know and love Finland’s landscape and people, hearing firsthand some of the stories of the heroic past that were to be the themes of his best work. A few years later, he became a professor of Latin and literature at the University of Helsinki, the Finnish capital, where his poetry became more prolific and more patriotic. He wrote two famous epic poems, earning a deserved place in Swedish literature, which for a Finnish person had an even greater impact. He also published, in 1844, a cycle of unrhymed verse romances that were derived from old Scandinavian legends. The first of his patriotic poems in a series of two collections, namely the poem *Maamme*, went on to become the official Finnish national anthem shortly after his death in 1877. Runeberg’s literary work shows the influence of classical literature and of Goethe in its "high-mindedness and purity of form". His originality consists of his power to combine this classicism with a Romantic feeling and with the realism that distinguishes his depiction of peasant life and character.

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63 Ibid.


65 Ibid.
Gustaf Fröding was a Swedish poet, born in the province of Värmland in 1860 and grew up at his family’s country estate. Unlike Runeberg, Fröding had a rather wealthy family, but a very unstable environment. His sister died while very young and his father became psychologically ill when Gustaf was only five years old. A few years later, his mother had a severe nervous breakdown and was admitted to a mental institute. He was raised by his older sister, who became his support and, more importantly, his storyteller. He developed a very strong bond with his sister and wrote a famous poem for her named *Sagoförtäljerskan* (The Story Teller). His father passed away when he was twenty-one years old, leaving behind a sizeable fortune. However, Gustaf spent most of his inheritance on alcohol. Two years later, he found himself back at home with no money or degree. To earn a living, he wrote poetry for a local newspaper, where his writing talent earned him a fulltime job. Unfortunately, he soon developed severe psychological problems and was admitted to a mental institute where he sought help for his alcoholism as well as mental problems. He spent the rest of his life between hospitals and nursing homes, but it is also during this time that he started writing more intensively. Ironically, his works were being published and becoming popular while he was suffering greatly from his problems. His simple and archaic writing, often in antiquated "old Swedish", won him acclaim as he wrote in both the "common Swedish" language as well as in the local dialects that were spoken in his home province of

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Värmland. Gustaf Fröding passed away in February 1911 in Stockholm leaving behind him a wealth of romantic poetry and a popular collection of dramatic and comedic plays. Fröding has generally been credited with having one of the largest influences on the nationalization of the Swedish language.

**Stenhammar and his Lieder**

Wilhelm Stenhammar, an admirer of both Johan Runeberg and Gustaf Fröding, set several of Fröding’s songs. A fellow composer of Stenhammar’s, Olallo Morales, had written a few compositions based on poems by Fröding, and sent them to Stenhammar asking for his opinion. In a letter written on July 5\(^{th}\) 1900, Stenhammar replied:

> With each passing day it becomes increasingly clear to me how all this business of original, interesting, bold and so on in the world of art is sheer worthless nonsense. The one and only thing that is necessary, the precondition of all true art, is expressiveness.

Stenhammar had found the music of his colleague too inflated. He explained:

> The melody should be everything, all else merely supportive, explanatory, a means but not an end. When setting a text to music, I must not sit down and wonder what to make up, because I must not make up anything, but I must read and penetrate the poem, listen to the timbre of the words, until this of itself takes shape in tonal texture, in melodic speech, in spoken melody, and the harmonies must stalk the mood of the words and figures

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69 Ibid.

70 Bo Wallner and Roger Tanner, program notes to Wilhelm Stenhammar, *Sånger/Songs*, performed by Anne Sofie von Otter, mezzosoprano and Bengt Forsberg, piano [England]: Musica Sveciae, MSCD 623, 1989, p. 19
must emerge from the idea of the whole, but everything must exist for the sake of the poem, deepening, explaining.\textsuperscript{71}

Anybody setting out to provide an overview of Swedish musical romanticism would be wrong to concentrate mainly on symphonies or string quartets.\textsuperscript{72} Bo Wallner, a Swedish musicologist, professor, and the foremost researcher and biographer of Stenhammar concluded:

Stenhammar's time was truly during the height of the \textit{lieder} in Swedish music. It was the solo song – the melody, the ballad, the evocative scene – which constituted the scarlet thread of development. This was the genre cultivated and loved in homes, in salons and soirees. It was often easy to perform, it was for the most party idyllic in character, and through its language and through the possibility of its melodies being inspired by folk songs and folk dance, it often had a national touch – and this at a time when National Romanticism meant a great deal.\textsuperscript{73}

Similar to Grieg, Stenhammar had great passion for the human voice and for romances. His love for voice and accompaniment probably stemmed from the "Stenhammar Quartet," a vocal ensemble consisting of Wilhelm’s sisters, brother, and the Swedish architect Ferdinand Boberg, which had become quite an attraction at family gatherings.\textsuperscript{74}

Helene Kaufman, Swedish soprano, and I will perform six \textit{Lieder} from his collection of thirty. I have picked these for their lyricism and wonderful poetry.

Translating and expressing lyrics in a foreign language can be a very difficult task,

\textsuperscript{71} Bo Wallner and Roger Tanner, program notes to Wilhelm Stenhammar, \textit{Sånger/Songs}, performed by Anne Sofie von Otter, mezzosoprano and Bengt Forsberg, piano [England]: Musica Sveciae, MSCD 623, 1989, p. 19

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., p. 20

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.

especially when the language is not widely known. This is where Stenhammar’s music can help guide the listener through the emotions of the text, as his Lieder are true to the tonality of the Swedish language, closely following the alliteration, fluctuations and modality of the spoken words.75

Please see Appendix B for a brief summary of the words for each song.

I Skogen (In the Forest)

Previously, Stenhammar had only sung music that he was exposed to by his family and church. Ironically, he was not allowed to take lessons because his father wanted him to become an architect. Nevertheless, he composed this piece at age sixteen set to a poem by the idylist A.T. Gellerstedt. It is a sonorous evocative scene with long melodic lines in the vocal part. There is a lot of similarity to Schumann’s tonal language, as Stenhammar was an admirer of his Lieder. One can hear the simplicity in the piano accompaniment of this piece. Stenhammar was in his very early stages of piano studies, but his love for composing already showed strong potential. The piece is set in Gb major, marked Andante sostenuto, in 6/4 with the feeling of a cradle rocking. He uses this simple rocking accompaniment as the narrator speaks of the spirituality of the forest.

Example 3.2. *I Skogen* (In the Forest), Stenhammar\textsuperscript{76}

MM: 1-7 (Opening section)

The song grows into a joyous *Giojoso* section, transitioning through several keys, as the narrator sings jubilantly about the sweet sounds of the thrush chirping high above the trees.

Example 3.3. *I Skogen* (In the Forest), Stenhammar\textsuperscript{77}

MM: 12-15 (Giojoso section)


\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
The return to the original rocking mood in Gb major happens quickly after the climax, as the singer expresses hope for happier times.

**Melodi (Melody)**

*Melodi* is a beautifully descriptive romance set in D minor. The accompaniment is forward-moving as the narrator sings that "everything in nature derives a voice from the loved one". At times, the accompaniment echoes the melodic voice line, as it changes the mood from major to the relative minor. As the piece comes to a close, the narrator asks: "Who gives you the power which becomes a melody?" Stenhammar then goes from the relative minor chord to the major plagal IV harmony, resolving into the dominant A major, reflecting the question in the piano.
Example 3.4. *Melodi* (Melody), Stenhammar\(^{78}\)

MM: 65-79 (Question and contemplation ending on A major)

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**Fylgia (The Fylgia)**

The Fylgia, which literally means "the follower" is a character from old Norse mythology. Dating back to the time of the Viking age, the Fylgia is a spiritual guardian. The Fylgia appeared in dreams, usually in the form of an animal. If someone saw the Fylgia while awake, it was a sign of his or her imminent death. At the time of death, the Fylgia would pass onto another member of the family.\(^{79}\) It is set in A minor with an *Allegro agitato* tempo marking. The accompaniment is somewhat difficult due to the non-stop sixteenths that exchange back and forth between both hands throughout the

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entire piece. This makes the piece very lively and light at the same time. The *fylgia* is clearly represented in the fluid accompaniment. The piece reaches its climax as the singer praises the *fylgia*, singing "you my longing for beauty, you who shield me from my sorrows", progressing through several keys, beginning with the original key of A minor, to D minor, G major, C major to F major.

Example 3.5. *Fylgia* (The Fylgia), Stenhammar

However, the very last word of the poem lands on C#, allowing the piece its rather extensive A major postlude in the parallel major.

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Example 3.6. *Fylgia* (The Fylgia), Stenhammar\textsuperscript{81}

MM: 52-60 (ending with piano solo)

*Till en Ros* (To a Rose)

The most romantically expressive of his vocal settings, *Till en ros*, has a very simple accompaniment compared to his other works. It is a beautiful and pensive story.

The song starts and ends with a reflective piano episode that is set in $\frac{3}{4}$, while the rest of the song is in $4/4$.

\textsuperscript{81} Wilhelm Stenhammar, *Thirty Songs of Wilhelm Stenhammar*, New York: Leyerle Publications, 1999, p. 31
Example 3.7. *Till en Ros* (To a Rose), Stenhammar\(^{82}\)
MM: 1-4 (opening piano solo in 3/4)

The song is performed in 4/4 as the singer asks to whom she should give her rose (heart). Her "question" is sung in strict meter, while her answer is set in *rubato* and develops dynamically with each question.

Example 3.8. *Till en Ros* (To a Rose), Stenhammar\(^{83}\)
MM: 5-10 ("Question" in *Andante* followed by "Answer" in *Rubato*)

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\(^{83}\) Ibid.
Her agony grows as the potential recipients of her rose become fewer and fewer, and the dynamics of the accompaniment becoming more vociferous. For each person, she has a reason why that person cannot receive her rose, allowing the accompaniment to swiftly play a measure of music for each specific character. A characteristic example is the single measure march-like response to her brother being drafted into the military.

Example 3.9. *Till en Ros* (To a Rose), Stenhammar\(^8^4\)
MM: 14 (March-like response "He’s taken up arms")

\[\text{Example 3.9. *Till en Ros* (To a Rose), Stenhammar}\]
\[\text{MM: 14 (March-like response "He’s taken up arms")}\]

\[\text{Example 3.9. *Till en Ros* (To a Rose), Stenhammar}\]
\[\text{MM: 14 (March-like response "He’s taken up arms")}\]

The poetry to this piece was written by Runeberg, the Swedish-speaking Finnish poet. The song is considered to be Stenhammar’s greatest. His sensitivity to the words and the vowel sounds is exemplary, true to the dramatic situation, and simply superb. The lyricism in this piece, set in D minor, is especially solemn. Each verse consists of the mother narrating the story about the daughter who returns from meeting her lover. Stenhammar uses a simple melodic accompaniment as the mother narrates.

\[\text{Example 3.9. *Till en Ros* (To a Rose), Stenhammar}\]
\[\text{MM: 14 (March-like response "He’s taken up arms")}\]

\[\text{Example 3.9. *Till en Ros* (To a Rose), Stenhammar}\]
\[\text{MM: 14 (March-like response "He’s taken up arms")}\]

\[\text{Example 3.9. *Till en Ros* (To a Rose), Stenhammar}\]
\[\text{MM: 14 (March-like response "He’s taken up arms")}\]

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Example 3.10. *Flickan kom ifrån sin älskings möte*
(The girl came from meeting her lover), Stenhammar\(^85\)
MM: 1-11 (Opening statement)

Mid-verse, as the daughter explains what she has done during her meeting,
Stenhammar changes the simple mood. The accompaniment travels from the key of D minor through Eb7 to D major to C major in richly textured triplets, creating a lush and rich sound in forward-moving triplets. He repeats the piano introduction in a condensed version after each verse.

Example 3.11. *Flickan kom ifrån sin älskings möte*  
(The girl came from meeting her lover), Stenhammar\(^86\)  
MM: 16-26 (Daughters response followed by a reprise of the piano intro)

This back-and-forth exchange happens three times. However, following the third verse, the daughter’s anger and despair towards her unfaithful lover is exquisitely rated in the insistent accompaniment with right-hand chordal-octaves into portato eighths, imitating the melody line, along with a legato *espressivo* left-hand forward-moving bass.

Example 3.12. Flickan kom ifrån sin älsklings möte
(The girl came from meeting her lover), Stenhammar⁸⁷
MM: 62-67 (insistent piano accompaniment with daughters’ narrative)

The piece has a great dynamic range, both for the singer and the pianist, from

fortissimo to a pppp. One of the most interesting aspects of the music is the rather ironic entrance of the parallel major chord on the last, and most "shocking", word of the song: otro (unfaithfulness). Stenhammar repeats the opening four measures at that point, but in the parallel major key. He finds his way back to minor again, finishing with an almost inaudible D minor octave marked dynamically with ppp.

Example 3.13. *Flickan kom ifrån sin älskings möte*
(The girl came from meeting her lover), Stenhammar

MM: 62-67 (climax on the word "pale" followed by ending in major/minor)

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*Dottern sade (The daughter said)*

This vivacious and high-spirited piece is a simple exchange between mother and daughter. It is one of few times in the poetry that the younger proves wiser than the elder.

Stenhammar has a superior way of distinguishing between the two characters in the piano accompaniment. Similar to the singer’s change of voice and character when singing more than one role, the piano part is composed with the same awareness. As the excited and love-struck daughter sings about getting married "this autumn", the animated accompaniment of non-stop sixteenths in Allegretto follows her voice very naturally. However, it quickly stops as soon as the mother responds, almost interrupting the daughter’s daydream. The one-measure accompaniment immediately preceding the mother’s response occurs in 2/4 instead of 4/4, going from quick sixteenths to a halting half-note chord. Stenhammar also changes the mood completely from a vivid A major accompaniment to a legato C# minor as the mother suggests that the daughter hold off her wedding "until the spring".
Example 3.14. *Dottern Sade* (The Daughter said), Stenhammar.\(^{89}\)
MM: 4-9 (daughters request halted by mother with change of timbre)

As the daughter denies her mother’s request, the music reverts to the fast-paced tempo and key, ending in a joyous firework of chords.

Example 3.15. *Dottern Sade* (The Daughter said), Stenhammar.\(^{90}\)
MM: 26-28 (grand ending)

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\(^{90}\) Ibid.
CONCLUSION

Most countries have composers and artists who are regarded as national heroes, people of great fame and stature, who have contributed to their society’s identity. In Sweden, Wilhelm Peterson-Berger and Wilhelm Stenhammar were the main proponents of the National-Romantic movement, each leading it their own way. Peterson-Berger advocated the use of folkloric ideas and rhythms in his music by popularizing traditional motifs in new compositions. Stenhammar used his influence to adapt the works of poets and use them as settings to his beloved song cycles. There is a wealth of music for piano as well as chamber music, which was composed during the time of the National-Romantic period in Sweden. I hope that the audience will enjoy learning a little about this important era in Swedish history, and that they will further seek out and explore the works of the composers and poets that I will be performing for them.
APPENDIX A

LECTURE RECITAL

Outline

Introduction (5 min.)

- Brief topic background with an introduction of the two composers

Wilhelm Peterson-Berger (40 min.)

- Background
- *Arnljot* and the Frösö rune stone
- Sommarhagen and his home
- Performance of *Frösöblomster* collection and individual examples, including *Troll* and mythological analysis, including musical analysis and comparison to Grieg’s *Trolltag* (March of the Dwarfs)
- The *Polska* historical background, video and sound recording with rhythmic comparisons
- *In Many Years* performance with background pictures

Wilhelm Stenhammar (35 min.)

- Background
- The Poetic *Edda* and Norse Mythology
- Johan Ludvig Runeberg
- Gustaf Fröding
• Performance of select works from song cycle including:
  o I Skogen (In the Forest)
  o Melodi (Melody)
  o Fylgia (The Fylgia)
  o Till en Ros (To a Rose)
  o Flickan kom ifrån sin älsklings möte (The girl came from meeting her lover)
  o Dottern sade (The daughter said)

Conclusion (5 min.)
APPENDIX B

SUMMARIES OF THE SONGS
(Swedish to English)

In order of performance

*I Skogen* (In the Forest)
Words by A.T. Gellerstedt

At dusk, the butterfly orchis (flower) spreads its fragrance, "its innermost being" and the thrush sings from the top of the fir tree, with joy in its voice at the coming of dawn. Teach me, butterfly orchid, to meet sorrow, teach me, thrush, to believe in brighter times.91

*Melodi* (Melody)
Words by Bo Bergman

Everything in nature derives a voice from the loved one. If she only walks through the fields, the grass sings, the clouds burn, the waves speak consolingly in her voice, and the threatening darkness retreats. Such is her power. But: "Who gives you the power which becomes a melody?"92

*Fylgia* (The Fylgia)
Words by Gustaf Fröding

Fylgia is a mirage which, in her purity and nobility, embodies the longing of the poet for love and beauty. "Do not flee from me!" is his repeated supplication to Fylgia, who protects him from the sorrows of the day and from his own base nature.93

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91 Bo Wallner, program notes to Wilhelm Stenhammar, *Sånger/Songs*, performed by Anne Sofie von Otter, mezzosoprano and Bengt Forsberg, piano [England]: Musica Sveciae, MSCD 623, 1989, p. 24

92 Ibid., p.26

93 Ibid., p.25
Till en Ros (To a Rose)
Words by J.L. Runeberg

The young girl asks on whom she is to bestow her heart’s rose. Her mother? Her sister or brother? But none of them is in reach – her mother is dead and her brother gone to the war. But what about her beloved? Sadly, the girl sings, how infinitely far off he is, "behind the leaves of three forests, behind the waves of three rivers". Who, then, is to have her red rose?94

Flickan kom ifrån sin älsklings möte
(The girl came from meeting her lover)
Words by J.L. Runeberg

The delight and the pain of love are concentrated in a few short exchanges between mother and daughter. Three meeting with the secret lover intrigue the mother: Why such red hands? Such red lips? And lastly: Why such pale cheeks?

The answers to the first questions are tauntingly elliptic: the rose-bush thorns and raspberries have stained hands and lips. But after the final meeting, where the girl returns home with pale cheeks, her mother is told the full truth. Her lover’s lips stained her lips red, his inconstancy made her cheeks white. The girl asks her mother to prepare a grave for her and to inscribe her fate on the cross.95

Dottern sade (The daughter said)
Words by J.L. Runeberg

The girl wants her wedding to be this autumn. The mother wants to put it off until spring, the best season for weddings, when birds also build nests. The daughter insist: "Every reason is right for those who in every season are lovers."96

94 Bo Wallner, program notes to Wilhelm Stenhammar, Singer/Songs, performed by Anne Sofie von Otter, mezzosoprano and Bengt Forsberg, piano [England]: Musica Sveciae, MSCD 623, 1989, p. 24

95 Ibid., p. 24

96 Ibid., p.25
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POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Please see supplemental file armenSlides.ppt for PowerPoint presentation.