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Finding Home: The Correlation between Amanda Maier's Piano Trio in E-flat Major and Swedish Folk Music

Christina Mathis

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Finding Home: The Correlation between Amanda Maier's Piano Trio in E-flat Major and
Swedish Folk Music

by

Christina Mathis

A Doctoral Project
Submitted to the Graduate School,
the College of Arts and Sciences
and the School of Music
at The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Approved by:

Dr. Michael Bunchman, Committee Chair
Dr. Edward Hafer
Dr. Joseph Brumbeloe
Dr. Ellen Elder

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ABSTRACT

This document examines the musical and rhythmical elements found in the Piano Trio in E-flat Major by Swedish composer Amanda Maier and their connection to Swedish folk music. The purpose of this project is to inform the reader of the history of Amanda Maier's Piano Trio in E-flat Major, performance practices related to the work – including a connection between common rhythmic and melodic motives found in Swedish folk music and ideas Maier uses repeatedly in her trio – and to discuss collaborative challenges that may occur in performance of this piece. The research was based on a study of Maier's life and musical and social connections to a small group of famous European composers of the mid to late 19th century who influenced Maier's compositional style and on a comparison to popular 19th century Swedish folk tunes and dances.

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I would like to say a very special thank you to my collaborative partners in this project – violinist Lily Martinez and cellist Ameni Zouehid. I deeply appreciate your commitment to this project. It has been a privilege to explore this beautiful work with you.

DEDICATION

This project is lovingly dedicated to my family for their unwavering support and encouragement. To my parents, Michael and Linda Rouse, thank you for the time and money you invested in my childhood piano lessons and for your support and encouragement in my continued education as an adult. I am forever grateful for all you have done for me.

To my daughters Cassia and Calista, you are my light and my reason for everything I have accomplished. You have been my biggest cheerleaders and inspire me to be my best in every way. Thank you for your steadfast love and support in each of my endeavors, but especially over the last three years. I love you both more than I can express.

And lastly, to the memory of my son Austin, whose short life continues to inspire and whose light will never dim.

I am truly blessed to be surrounded by so much love.

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CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

In 2016, Reinier Thiadens, Amanda Maier’s great-grandson, discovered the score to her Piano Trio in E-flat Major hidden among the family papers.¹ For over 140 years, this piece was assumed to have been lost. Understandably, its discovery has reignited an interest in Maier’s compositions. This project will highlight the folk elements in Maier’s piano trio and how they are connected to Swedish folk songs and dances.

Based on frequent online searches, Maier’s Trio has not been performed often since its discovery. There are only two recordings of this piece in its entirety. The first is from by dB Productions Sweden, the record label recording Maier’s works. The instrumentalists on this recording are violinist Cecilia Zilliacus, cellist Kati Raitinen, and pianist Bengt Forsberg. The second recording is by the German piano trio Klaviertrio Würzburg.²

There are also only two known piano trios in the United States who have performed this piece – the Third Coast Chamber Collective³ and the Lysander Piano Trio.⁴ No recordings were located of Lysander Piano Trio performing this work. There is one performance online of the Third Coast Chamber Collective performing an excerpt of the third movement, *Andante*.

¹ dBProductionsSweden, “Amanda Maier (1853-1894): Piano Trio in E-flat – Rediscovered Masterpiece!” May 24, 2018, YouTube video, 9:18, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dF7-AtKhZds&t=32s>.

² Maria Cording, Katharina Cording, and Peer-Christoph Pulc, “Klaviertrio Würzburg Repertoire,” *Klaviertrio Würzburg*, accessed September 11, 2022, <http://www.trio-wuerzburg.de/english/main.htm>.

³ Naomi Rose Herzog, “Festival 2021,” *Third Coast Chamber Collective*, accessed September 11, 2022, <https://www.thirdcoastchambercollective.com/projects/festival-4jxnx>.

⁴ Sarah Dinin, “Recital Programs,” *Lysander Piano Trio*, Last modified 2021, accessed September 12, 2022, <http://www.lysandertrio.com/programs>.

Maier composed her trio when she was just twenty years old. She had recently moved to Leipzig from Sweden to further her education by studying violin and composition. Over the next three years, she spent eight months of the year in Leipzig, then returned home to Landskrona, Sweden each summer. While in Leipzig, she studied violin with Englebert Röntgen, concertmaster of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, and composition with Carl Reinecke, director of the Gewandhaus Orchestra.⁵ It was during this time that she met her future husband, Julius Röntgen, son of her violin teacher. Notes from his diary indicate that Maier received up to fifty violin lessons during the eight months she spent in Leipzig each year.⁶

The trio was composed in 1873-1874, less than two years after leaving Sweden for Leipzig. Maier lived and composed during the age of Romanticism, when personal expression, individualism, and nationalism were at their peak. It was common during this time for composers to incorporate elements of their native folk music into their compositions. Evidence that her Piano Trio had ties to Nordic folk tunes is found in a letter she wrote following her first year in Leipzig:

Everything has gone as I could ever wish, and I probably made significant progress...we also performed a new trio that I composed for piano, violin, and cello...My trio is going to be very successful and looks very good; One finds in Leipzig that I am a pure national, that is to say Nordic in my compositions, which they are very fond of.⁷

⁵ Jennifer Martyn, "Discovering Composer Amanda Maier," In the Muse: Performing Arts Blog, accessed September 13, 2022, <https://blogs.loc.gov/music/2016/11/discovering-composer-amanda-maier/>.

⁶ Jennifer Frances Martyn, "Amanda Maier: Her Life and Career as a Nineteenth-Century Woman Violinist" (DMA diss, University of Toronto, 2018), 8, <https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/89887>.

⁷ Ibid.

According to Matthew Gelbart, there are five post-Romantic criteria that can be used to evaluate whether a work can be considered nationalistic.

1. The creator of a piece is viewed as a representative of their country, simply by virtue of being from that country. For example, Grieg's works are often considered Nordic because he is from Norway.
2. A piece's musical material is in the musical style or contains musical idioms connected to a particular country.
3. A piece is considered to embody the same values as its composer's country of origin. Gelbart uses the example of German music expressing a masculine sound. Likewise, many critics consider Beethoven's music to also represent that virtue.
4. A piece's subject matter can be related to a specific national event, as Chopin's Ballade No. 38 or many of Verdi's operas.
5. A melody used by the government or an institution of a composer's country of origin will retain a nationalistic association.⁸

Based on these criteria, particularly the first and second in Gelbart's list, Maier's piano trio qualifies as nationalistic music. This was not Maier's only work in which she incorporated the nationalistic ideas Maier references in her letter; they are found not only in her Piano Trio in E-Flat Major but also in her Violin Sonata in B Minor, which she completed in December 1873 – just four months before she completed the trio. These folk elements are discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

⁸ Benedict Taylor and Matthew Gelbart, Essay, in *The Cambridge Companion to Music and Romanticism*, 83-85, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

CHAPTER II – AMANDA MAIER

Carolina Amanda Erika Maier was born on February 20, 1853, in the small town of Landskrona.⁹ Landskrona is located in Southern Sweden on the shores of the Öresund, a strait which forms the border between Denmark and Sweden. Maier's father, Carl Eduard Maier, emigrated from southern Germany to Landskrona, where he opened a pastry shop and also became a well-known musician in the area. Not much else is known about Maier's childhood other than that her father was her first music teacher.¹⁰

At the age of sixteen, Maier moved to Stockholm and joined the director's class at the Royal College of Music, an elite class of students that comprised less than ten percent of the student population.¹¹ As part of her exit exams for the director's class, she was tested in harmony, counterpoint, composition, instrumentation, history and aesthetics of music, and elementary singing, as well as four instruments - organ, piano, violin, and cello.

Maier was an anomaly. At that time, most state supported music schools did not allow women to study composition.¹² Not only was Maier the first woman to earn a degree in conducting from the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, thus becoming

⁹ Eva Ohrström, "Amanda Maier-Röntgen," *Swedish Musical Heritage*, Last modified 2023, accessed January 11, 2023, <https://www.swedishmusicalheritage.com/composers/maier-rontgen-amanda/>.

¹⁰ Christian Lambour, "European Female Instrumentalists of the 18th and 19th Centuries," *Maier, Amanda -Sophie Drinker Institut*, accessed September 11, 2022, <https://www.sophie-drinker-institut.de/maier-amanda>.

¹¹ Jennifer Martyn, "Amanda Maier: Her Life and Career as a Nineteenth-Century Woman Violinist," 1.

¹² Karin Pendle and Nancy B. Reich, "European Composers and Musicians, Ca. 1800-1890," Essay, In *Women and Music: A History*, 147-192, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004.

Sweden's first female conductor, she was the only woman to earn this degree in her lifetime.¹³

Maier was a gifted, multifaceted musician. She excelled as an organist, violinist, pianist, cellist, and composer and was well educated in each of these areas. Although her primary musical interests were organ, violin, and composition, she also composed for solo piano. In 1869, she composed a set of twenty-five preludes for piano; and in 1871, she composed Klavierstück in C# Minor.¹⁴

In 1873, she moved to Leipzig to further her studies and achieved great success as a composer and performing artist. Between the years of 1876 and 1880, Maier, along with soprano Louise Pyk, pianist Augusta Kiellander, and baritone Wilhelm Lundvik, held three major tours in Sweden and Norway presenting concerts of her works, including a concert for King Oscar II of Sweden.¹⁵ This was during a time in which women were not only discouraged from composing but were told they did not have the mental and creative capabilities to be successful composers. "Reproductive genius can be admitted to the pretty sex, but productive genius unconditionally cannot...There will never be a woman composer, at best a misprinting copyist...I do not believe in the feminine form of the word 'creator.'"¹⁶ This mentality was prevalent throughout every area of the arts:

Neither for music, nor poetry, nor the plastic arts do they possess any real feeling or receptivity... Nor can one expect anything else from women if one considers that the most eminent heads of the entire sex have proved incapable of a truly great, genuine and original achievement in art, or indeed creating anything at all of lasting value: ...the

¹³ Ohrström, "Amanda Maier-Röntgen."

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Martyn, "Amanda Maier: Her Life and Career as a Nineteenth-Century Woman Violinist," 1.

¹⁶ Pamela Susskind, Introduction to the score, Clara Wieck Schumann, Selected Piano Music (New York: Da Capo, 1979), vii.

reason being precisely that they lack all objectivity of mind. Women, taken as a whole, are and remain thorough and incurable philistines.¹⁷

It was a common misconception during that time that women were incapable of composing music with any measure of depth. They were considered unable to distance themselves from their emotions enough to understand the theoretical, logical, and mathematical intricacies necessary to composing quality music and that their musical skills were best kept within the home, usually playing the piano.¹⁸ However, Maier challenged this philosophy and made her mark amongst a lineup of male European composers. These men were household names in the world of High German Romanticism; and Maier, a woman and lesser-known composer, was not only associating with them but was also writing and performing alongside them. Maier was not to remain anonymous, though. She had already made a name for herself in Stockholm as the first woman to earn a degree in conducting and through her concert tours; and during the early years of her time in Leipzig, her reputation as a composer expanded as she increasingly promoted her works.

Since her arrival in Leipzig, Maier and Julius Röntgen, the son of her violin teacher, had developed a romantic interest and had begun courting. They announced their engagement in 1879, while Maier was in Leipzig during a break in her concert tour. There is evidence from Maier's journals that, while she enjoyed these tours in the years before her marriage, she did sorely miss her soon-to-be husband and counted down the

¹⁷ Agonito, Rosemary, and Arthur Schopenhauer, Essay, In *History of Ideas on Woman: A Source Book*, New York: Putnam, 1977.

¹⁸ Jim Samson and Katharine Ellis, "The Structures of Musical Life," Essay, In *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth Century Music*, 360, Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2014.

days until they were together again. She even declined an offer for an American tour, although the exact reason is not known.¹⁹ Based on these journal entries, it is entirely possible that she chose to end this portion of her career in favor of taking care of her growing family. “Marriage had the effect of reducing her chances of professional development. Her own performances ceased almost entirely, and her music was not played in public.”²⁰

In 1880, Maier married Julius Röntgen, her violin teacher’s son, and they soon welcomed their first son, Julius. Due to health issues, Maier experienced three miscarriages before giving birth to their second son, Englebert, five years later.²¹ With the growth of her family, Maier’s focus shifted from her own performance career to supporting her husband’s career as founder of the Amsterdam Conservatory and providing their sons with quality music instruction.²² Maier and Röntgen occasionally composed together and frequently held musical salons in their home. In these salons, they hosted other composers such as Edvard Grieg (whom Maier introduced to Röntgen),²³ Anton Rubinstein, and Johannes Brahms.²⁴ Maier’s journals from January 1881 indicate that during his time in Amsterdam during the end of the previous year, she had socialized and played music with the esteemed composer.²⁵ Just seven years later, while visiting

¹⁹ Martyn, “Amanda Maier: Her Life and Career as a Nineteenth-Century Woman Violinist,” 20.

²⁰ Ohrström, “Amanda Maier Röntgen.”

²¹ Martyn, “Amanda Maier: Her Life and Career as a Nineteenth-Century Woman Violinist,” 22.

²² Ohrström, “Amanda Maier-Röntgen.”

²³ Jurjen Vis, Fuglsang as an American Crossroads: Paradise and Paradise Lost, “The Grieg Society,” Last modified 2011, Accessed January 9, 2023, <https://griegsociety.com>.

²⁴ Lambour, “European Female Instrumentalists of the 18th and 19th Centuries.”

²⁵ Martyn, “Amanda Maier: Her Life and Career as a Nineteenth-Century Woman Violinist,” 24.

Nice to recuperate from an illness, Maier stayed in the home of Heinrich and Elisabeth von Herzogenberg. While there, Brahms sent the ladies a copy of his Violin Sonata in D Minor to read through, which they did joyfully. When Clara Schumann visited the next spring, she and Maier played this piece together.²⁶

Maier and Röntgen's home soon became a focal point of Amsterdam's cultural life; however, Maier rarely performed in the musical salons organized by her husband. Whether this was because of domestic responsibilities or because of her failing health is unknown. She did, however, continue composing; and she and Röntgen composed at least two works together. *Schwedische Weisen und Tänze (Swedish Tunes and Dances)*, a set of six arrangements of Swedish songs and dances for violin and piano, was composed in 1882. *Zweigespräche (Dialogues)* was a collection of ten original solos for piano, to which Maier and Röntgen contributed equally. It was published in 1883.²⁷

Following the birth of her second son in 1886, Maier contracted pneumonia, and her health continued to decline over the next several years. However, there were weeks and sometimes even months in which she experienced reprieve and was able to travel and present small performances with her friends. On June 15, 1894, at the age of forty-one, Maier passed away from tuberculosis. She had finished a music lesson with her sons just a few hours before she died. Her husband noted that her passing was peaceful and calm.²⁸

²⁶ Ibid, 24.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Jurjen Vis, Essay, In *Gaudeamus: The Life Of Julius Röntgen (1855-1932)* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2007), 195.

CHAPTER III – PIANO TRIO IN E-FLAT MAJOR AND ITS CONNECTIONS TO SWEDISH FOLK MUSIC

Maier's piano trio was written during the years 1873-1874. According to Julius Röntgen's journal, Maier completed her piano trio in 1874 – less than two years after she moved to Leipzig to continue her studies.²⁹ Considering that she was studying theory with Ernst Friedrich Richter, the Cantor of the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig, at the time during which this work was composed, it is believed that she had his help in composing this piece.³⁰ Notes in Röntgen's journal indicate that he and Maier had worked on the trio together, and his cousin, Julius Klengel, helped in transcribing the parts. The first performance of the work was on the day it was completed – May 20, 1874. Röntgen was the pianist, Klengel was the cellist, and Maier was the violinist for the work's premiere.³¹

According to Maier and Röntgen's journals, the trio was performed a total of fourteen times between 1874 and 1883.³² Although Maier's journal entries during the years 1875 and 1876 indicate that she may have intended to promote the trio, most of her performances of the work were for friends and family. There are no records of a public performance of the trio during Maier's lifetime.³³

The work contains four movements:

I. Allegro

²⁹ Ibid, 289-290.

³⁰ Martyn, "Amanda Maier: Her Life and Career as a Nineteenth-Century Woman Violinist," 11.

³¹ Klas Gagne, Commentary in score of Piano Trio in E-flat Major by Amanda Maier-Röntgen, Stockholm: Levande Musikary, 2018.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

- II. Scherzo
- III. Andante
- IV. Allegro con fuoco

No opus number was given to this work. Interestingly, Maier designated only one of her works with an opus number (*Swedish Tunes and Dances for Violin and Piano*, Op. 6). Additionally, Maier's original scores contain no dates. According to Fridtjof Thiadens, Maier's great-grandson who discovered the score for the trio, there were discrepancies between the full score and the scores of the string parts. The editors who engraved the newly discovered scores attempted to use what appeared to be the latest changes Maier had made; however, the commentary in the addendum of the engraved score contains several pages of notes pointing out inconsistencies throughout the work.³⁴

Movements one and four are traditional in structure. Both are in sonata form with clear distinctions between the exposition, development, and recapitulation. Additionally, melodic motives from movements one and three return in movement four, creating a finality that ties the movements together beautifully.

Whereas movements one, two, and four begin with all instruments, movement three opens with only piano and cello. Each movement portrays a different mood. Dynamics, phrasing, and articulations are clearly marked throughout; although, there are some discrepancies between what is written in the full score and marks in each of the string scores. This is explained more thoroughly in the score commentary below.³⁵

S1 [string 1 – violin] and **S2** [string 2 – cello] have, however, been copied with more care and accuracy than **A** [full score], and furthermore, many passages have been more dynamically developed, are more expressive and lively than the corresponding entries in **A**. This has been interpreted to

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

suggest that **S1** and **S2** reflect a later, more deliberate stage in the compositional process. **A** comes close to the character of a ‘draft score’.

Moreover, **S1**, the violin part, has more changes in pencil (often in blue) than **S2**, which is to be expected since the composer would probably have used this part for performance, and might therefore have added her new and changed ideas to it, as they gradually emerged. It is therefore possible that **S1** represents the composer’s intentions at their latest stage of development.³⁶

As mentioned previously, Maier was proud of the Nordic traits apparent in her compositions. In a newspaper article about Maier’s successful musical tours, the Swedish national newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* noted:

At the same occasion a performance was also given of a trio for piano, violin and cello, composed by Miss Maier, which seems to have been particularly well received. It was said in Leipzig that Miss Maier’s compositions generally, and the trio in particular, are quite ‘national’, which is to say written in a very Nordic style and spirit. Miss Maier returns to Leipzig in September to continue her studies.³⁷

Nationalism and the inclusion of folk elements were strong components of Romantic music. Jan Ling has defined folk music as: “rural music taught, without being written down, by one generation to the next.”³⁸

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, there was some debate over whether Swedish folk music actually existed. A popular quote during that time stated: “The Swede has absolutely no national music; his lot is to imitate others.”³⁹

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Jan Ling, *A History of European Folk Music*, Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2007, 439.

³⁹ Archer Taylor, *Folk-Song: Sweden and Finland*, The University of California, 1920, 27.

Regardless, Grieg's music is synonymous with Nordic nationalism. It was his way of connecting the more mainstream music world of Europe to that of his lesser-known Norway. Maier did the same through her Violin Sonata in B Minor and her Piano Trio in E-flat Major. It has been said of Grieg that, "In leaving home, he seemed to find home."⁴⁰ Perhaps the same was true of Maier.

The beginnings of Swedish folk music can be traced to the late 1700s by way of Germany and France. In 1785, German author Johann Abraham Schulz defined *Volkston* (German for *folk song*, or literally, *folk tone*) as "melodies of the utmost simplicity that are easy to catch and have an aura of something we already seem to know."⁴¹

The violin became one of the most important instruments in Swedish folk music. Sweden was first introduced to the violin in the mid-17th century when Queen Christina hired French musicians to play for her court. By the 18th century, the violin had become Sweden's most popular instrument. Even those in the country's rural, less educated areas had learned to play this new instrument.⁴² While all Swedish culture was enhanced by innovative folk tunes and dances, the type of musical traditions being created differed depending on the location. Folk music heard in the larger cities was based on European bourgeois dance music with its arpeggiated chords and wide leaps. In the more rural and less refined

⁴⁰ Daniel Kilham Dogde, "Scandinavian Character and Scandinavian Music," *The Sewanee Review*, 19, no. 3 (July 1911): 281.

⁴¹ Bob Romanowski-Grüneke, "World Federation of Music Therapy" (WFMT), accessed September 13, 2022, <https://wfmt.info.2014/04/01/german-folk-music>.

⁴² Ling, 439.

areas of Sweden, folk music was modal, used only a narrow range, and was more repetitive, using a series of standard motives.⁴³

There are two standard motives that Maier features throughout her trio. The first is an interval of a sixth or larger, indicating a connection to European bourgeois dance music. The larger interval was a way to show that the composer was highly educated. Maier also used larger intervallic leaps to create tension and add a sense of anticipation. The second element which Maier uses is the rhythmic cell of a dotted eighth note followed by a sixteenth in either direction. These elements can be seen in Musical Example 1, “Belfomft” (a traditional Swedish folk song). In addition to the two elements already listed, also notice that this example is in a major key, as is Maier’s piano trio. The use of major keys in folk music from Scandinavian countries is extremely rare, as will be discussed later.



Musical Example 1 “Belfomft.

Swedish folk music elements that Maier incorporates in her piano trio.⁴⁴

⁴³ Ibid, 440.

⁴⁴ Folke-Sange Og Melodier.” *IMSLP*. Accessed January 11, 2023.
https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/3/3e/IMSLP398623-PMLP641979-folkesangeogmel00berggoog_danske_1860.pdf.

Musical Example 2, the traditional Swedish folk song “Guftav Bilhelm Blom,” contains the same elements mentioned previously and is in the same key as Maier’s trio.



Musical Example 2 “Guftav Bilhelm Blom.”
Swedish folk music elements that Maier incorporates in her piano trio.⁴⁵

Maier incorporates the dotted eighth rhythmic cell in her Violin Sonata in B Minor (composed just months before the trio) and in her contributions to *Swedish Songs and Dances*, which she composed with her husband Julius Röntgen. (See Musical Examples 3 and 4 below.) This rhythm, based on the Swedish polska, is common in all types of Swedish folk music. (More information about the Swedish polska will be included with movement two.)



Musical Example 3 “Sonata in B Minor, Allegro, mm. 1-8 by Amanda Maier.”

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Dotted eighth rhythm common in Swedish folk music seen in the violin part of Maier’s Violin Sonata.⁴⁶

The image shows a musical score for the first movement of Maier's Violin Sonata, measures 1-8. The score is in 3/4 time and features a violin and piano. The tempo is 'Moderato ed espressivo'. The violin part has a dotted eighth rhythm. The piano part has a 'p' dynamic. The score includes markings for 'con Ped.', 'mf', 'p', and 'poco più f'.

Musical Example 4 “Swedish Songs and Dances, Song 1, mm. 1-8.”

Dotted eighth rhythm common in Swedish folk music seen in the violin part.⁴⁷

Movement One: Allegro

All elements mentioned above are combined in the opening measure of Maier’s trio (Musical Example 5). The first movement opens with all parts in unison, measure signify one voice or one instrument. The earliest Swedish folk music was sung or played by one person, and transcriptions often include only the vocal line and a simple piano accompaniment, or the solo instrumental line. If other instruments are added, unison or octaves (as seen in Maier’s trio) indicate a singular voice.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Ohrström, “Amanda Maier-Röntgen.”

⁴⁷ “Maier, Amanda.” *IMSLP*. Accessed January 11, 2023. https://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Maier%2C_Amanda.

⁴⁸ Ohrström, “Amanda Maier-Röntgen.”



Musical Example 5 “Piano Trio in E-flat Major by Amanda Maier.”

Maier introduced Swedish folk elements from the opening measure of her Piano Trio.⁴⁹

The first folk element in Maier’s trio is the interval of a sixth seen between the second and third notes in measure one. Larger intervals were used to indicate folk music of the more educated middle class; whereas the folk music of the more rural and less educated communities was mostly modal and moved stepwise.⁵⁰ This interval is repeated in various tonalities, creating melodic tension and a sense of anticipation.

The second folk element Maier incorporates in this measure is the dotted eighth followed by a sixteenth. Maier uses this rhythmic cell in multiple melodic configurations in every movement of her piano trio.

Another common element that is seen in much of the folk music from Scandinavian countries, including Sweden, is the use of minor keys. The high number of folk songs originating in this area that are written in minor keys is in direct contrast to the

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Daniel Kilham Dodge, “The Sewanee Review.” *Scandinavian Character and Scandinavian Music* 19, no 3, July 1911, 279-284.

number of jovial dances also originating in Scandinavian countries.⁵¹ While Maier’s piano trio is centered on a major key, there are several pivotal moments in which she employs the use of minor keys, such as in Musical Example 6 below. In this example from the development section of Maier’s Andante, she builds on each of the previously mentioned elements creating tension through the use of a three-voice canon of the theme as it moves through various keys – mostly minor – and eventually returns to the tonic of E-flat Major.

Musical Example 6 “Piano Trio in E-flat Major by Amanda Maier,” mm. 104-121. Maier creates tension by moving the theme through a number of keys.⁵²

Movement Two: Scherzo

Maier continued her use of these folk elements in the second movement, with the most common being the interval of a 6th (or larger) and the dotted eighth/sixteenth rhythm. In the second movement, this rhythm is tied to a specific Swedish dance – the polska. The polska was the most common folk dance in 19th century Sweden. Still popular today, the polska can be compared to the Polish mazurka. As it is a dance for couples, it is always danced by two people. A recent study of Swedish dancers fluent in polska dancing showed that when dancing with a partner who is also fluent in polska, the result can be mesmerizing. “When the continual turning of

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ohrström, “Amanda Maier-Röntgen.”

the bodies works frictionless within the couple, the movement creates what the dancers try to capture in words, such as elation, trance, and meditation.”⁵³

The polska is in 3/8 time, with the feeling of one large beat per measure and is similar to the Polish mazurka. Polskas are generally written using one of four main rhythmic organizations:

Stress on beats one and three (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Polska rhythm with stress on first and third beats.

Comparatively equal stress on all three beats (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Polska rhythm with equal stress on all beats.

Irregular meters and groupings of both two and three beats (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Polska rhythm with irregular meter and groupings of both two and three beats.

⁵³ Mats Nilsson, *The Swedish Polska*, Translated by Eivor Cormack and Jill Ann Johnson, *Music Verket*, Stockholm: Svenskt visarkiv, 2017, accessed September 13, 2022, https://musikverket.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Polska_FINAL2.pdf.

Irregular patterns of one consistently longer beat followed by a beat that is consistently shortened (Figure 4).⁵⁴



Figure 4. Irregular polska pattern.

The polska rhythm Maier employs in her Scherzo is a combination of examples two and four above and is known as the *ojämn polska* (uneven polska). In this type of polska, the beats can be divided into triplets but might be written as either straight eighth notes or a dotted eighth followed by a sixteenth. Each measure is felt as one beat, resulting in a lilting, dance-like ambience.⁵⁵

The polska was a common Swedish dance in the 19th century and is still popular in Swedish culture today. The polska tune typically consisted of two related phrases, each of about eight measures. Each phrase is repeated and is followed by a repeat of the entire structure for a total of sixty-four measures. Traditionally, Swedish folk music was performed solo. When it was performed by two musicians, they played either in unison or in octaves.⁵⁶ The polska tune typically consisted of two related phrases, each of about eight measures. Each phrase is repeated and is followed by a repeat of the entire structure for a total of sixty-four measures. Several of these elements – the rhythmic feel of one

⁵⁴ Dan Lundbert, *Folkmusik I Sverige (Folk Music in Sweden)*, Hedemora: Gidlunds, 2005.

⁵⁵ Henrik Norbeck. “Swedish Traditional Music.” *Swedish Traditional Music – Svensk Folkmusik*. Last modified 1998. Accessed December 9, 2022. <https://www.norbeck.nu/swedtrad/>.

⁵⁶ Lundbert, 2005.

large beat per measure, the eight-bar phrase structure, and solo voicing – are seen in “Folkwisa Fran Dalarne” (Musical Example 7).

Swedish folk song

anon. (Sweden)



The image shows four staves of musical notation for a Swedish folk song. The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/8 time signature. The melody is characterized by irregular rhythmic patterns, often featuring a longer note followed by a shorter note. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata over the final note.

Musical Example 7 “Folkwisa Fran Dalarne.”

This traditional Swedish folk song and Maier’s Scherzo share similar rhythmic and melodic ideas.

Maier opens her Scherzo with a similar rhythmic and melodic motive comprised of irregular patterns, one longer beat, and one shorter beat. The opening of the Scherzo is in octaves for the first twenty measures, which immediately repeats. This pattern of phrases, while not exact, is seen in the first 64 measures of Maier’s Scherzo.

The theme, shown in Musical Example 8, is introduced in all instruments in mm. 1-8. In measure nine, a new melodic idea is introduced, the piano and strings exchange ideas, then this entire sequence is repeated. In measure 21, the same rhythmic motive is developed with a slightly modified melodic line. By the time the half cadence at measure 44 is reached, this rhythmic idea has been presented multiple times. Additionally, the

opening eight measures are in octaves and contain the interval of a sixth introduced in movement one and associated with the European upper class.

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "Scherzo". It consists of two systems of staves. The top system has a treble clef and a bass clef, with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The bottom system also has a treble clef and a bass clef, with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and the word "Scherzo" written above the treble clef. The music is in 3/8 time and features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The first two measures of each system are marked with a blue box, and the next two measures are marked with a blue box. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Musical Example 8 “Scherzo, mm. 1-8.”
The opening 8 measures of Maier’s Scherzo.

Movement Two: Trio

Following the first statement of Maier’s Scherzo is the Trio, in which she briefly pauses the inclusion of folk elements and instead presents a more relaxed mood, giving the feeling of a lullaby combined with a slow waltz. The open chords in the left hand are reminiscent of Brahms. It is helpful to think of each beat of the Trio as equal to one entire measure of the Scherzo. For this transition to feel organic, all players should breathe together at the entrance of the Trio (Musical Example 9). Following the trio is a return to the scherzo.

Trio. Un poco meno mosso

The image displays a musical score for a Trio, measures 1 through 14. It is written in 3/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system (measures 1-7) is marked 'Trio. Un poco meno mosso' and 'p dolce'. The second system (measures 8-14) is also marked 'Trio. Un poco meno mosso' and includes a 'cresc.' (crescendo) marking. The score features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment with open chords.

Musical Example 9 “Trio, mm. 1-14.”
 The open chords in Maier’s Trio are reminiscent of Brahms.

Movement Three: Andante

In the third movement of Maier’s trio, she continues with previously incorporated elements of Swedish folk music such as the use of intervals of a 6th or more, minor modes, and the familiar dotted eighth/sixteenth rhythm. Notice also that Maier incorporates a new melodic motive – a third (in either direction) followed by a second (in the opposite direction). In the opening of her Andante, Maier specifically uses an ascending minor third followed by a descending minor second (Musical Example 10).

Musical Example 10 “Andante, mm. 1-4.”

In the opening four measures of Maier’s Andante, the cello introduces a new melodic motive.

Although this new melodic idea sounds like other folk elements Maier uses in her trio, it is not based on a specific folk idea. However, Maier incorporates this new motive throughout the movement, combining it with previously used folk elements. She even briefly overlaps the new theme with some of the folk elements to add even more development to those elements (Musical Example 11).

Musical Example 11 “Andante, mm. 1-12.”

Maier’s new melodic idea is beautifully woven with previously included folk elements.

The accent marks seen in both examples are a commonly used 19th century performance practice, signifying to take slightly more time.⁵⁷ The movement ends with all elements combined in a delicate canon, as seen in Musical Example 12 below.

The image displays a musical score for three systems, numbered 59, 63, and 67. Each system consists of a vocal line (soprano and bass) and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is common time (C). The score includes various performance markings such as *p* (piano), *p espress.* (piano, expressive), *sempre diminuendo* (always decrescendo), *pizz.* (pizzicato), and *PP* (pianissimo). The notation includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings across the staves.

Musical Example 12 “Andante, mm. 59-71.”

A combination of ideas come together in the final measures of the Andante.

⁵⁷ Rosen, “Schumann: Triumph and Failure of the Romantic Ideal,” Essay, In *The Romantic Generation*, 646–710, London: Fontana Press, 1999.

Movement Four: Finale. Allegro con fuoco

Movement four, *Finale. Allegro con fuoco*, is an exhilarating blend of movements one and three as well as previously used folk elements. It is also the most challenging of the four movements collaboratively. This movement is filled with minute details that are hidden until rehearsing with all instruments together. The given time signature is 4/4, but the overall feel of the movement is cut time. The movement opens in E-flat Major and introduces a new melodic motive in the piano (Musical Example 13).

The image shows the first four measures of the piece. The title 'Finale. Allegro con fuoco' is centered above the staff. The music is in E-flat Major (two flats) and 4/4 time. The piano part (left hand) begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The violin part (right hand) begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic, playing a melodic line with a 6th interval. The piece concludes with a final chord in E-flat Major.

Musical Example 13 “Finale. Allegro con fuoco, mm. 1-4.”

The opening measures of Maier’s Finale begin with a 6th in the piano and introduce a new melodic motive in all instruments.

This motive is repeated in both string parts in octaves, a reference to previously used folk elements (Musical Example 14).

The image shows measures 13 through 16. The tempo is marked 'a tempo'. The music is in E-flat Major. The piano part (left hand) plays a melodic line with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The violin part (right hand) plays the same melodic line in octaves with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The piece concludes with a final chord in E-flat Major.

Musical Example 14 “Finale. Allegro con fuoco, mm. 13-16.”

In these measures, the strings are in octaves, just as in Swedish folk music.

The use of octaves in the strings continues for the next eight measures, then the interval of a sixth appears in the violin. A few measures later (m. 39), the piano and violin play the ascending third/descending second motive from movement three. The exposition of this movement is filled with previously seen folk elements such as the interval of a sixth and the dotted eighth/sixteenth rhythm. The development of the fourth movement begins with an augmentation of the theme from movement three in the violin. Notice also the use of accent marks in the left hand of the piano and the *messa di voce* figure in the violin in m. 52, common Romantic indications to take more time (Musical Example 15).

Musical Example 15 “Finale. Allegro con fuoco, mm. 51-54.”

The accent marks in left hand of the piano and the *messa di voce* in the violin (m. 52) are common Romantic indications to take time.

Over the next several measures, new melodic ideas are presented and are passed among the instruments. These ideas alternate with the augmented theme from movement three for the remainder of the development. Beginning in m.165, two major elements of Swedish folk music are presented concurrently - the strings are playing the dotted eighth/sixteenth rhythm while the piano is playing octaves that occasionally include an ascending seventh (Musical Example 16).

Musical Example 16 “Finale. Allegro con fuoco, mm. 166-168.”
 Two elements of Swedish folk music are presented concurrently.

The cadence which follows leads back into the tonic of E-flat Major and the presentation of the theme from movement 1, *Allegro*. The remainder of the movement combines this and other ideas from movements 1 and 3 before culminating in a brilliant stretto of the movement 4 theme in all voices.

While this work remains true to the Romantic ideals of the 19th century, Amanda Maier’s Swedish heritage is distinctly seen as well. This trio is a delicate combination of Maier’s two homes – her native Sweden with its simple, yet beautiful folk ideas and the musical training she received in Europe that influenced her compositional style. The unexpected discovery of this trio in Maier’s archives has prompted a resurgence of interest in her compositions. Maier’s life and work are deserving of recognition, and it is my hope that this paper will serve as a catalyst for others to research more of her compositions and bring to light a lesser known but no less proficient composer.

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