

NOTE FROM THE EDITORIAL STAFF

With the present volume, the German Music Information Centre (MIZ) is publishing select information on Germany's musical life and presenting it for the first time to an international readership. In this way it does justice to the great interest taken in this subject, as is obvious from the many queries that reach the MIZ every day from abroad. Time and again the queries have centred on music education and training, musical professions and the job market, the creation, performance and promotion of music, and the music industry. But there is an equally great demand for musical statistics, whether on concert and opera performances, orchestras, choruses and ensembles, music education both inside and outside the state school system, or the public and private funding of music. Given this state of affairs, it is only logical that the MIZ should systematically assemble its responses to all these queries in a new publication.

That said, the idea of an English-language volume on Germany's musical life is hardly new. As early as 1997 a collection of essays in a similar vein was published by the German Music Council's longstanding President and current Honorary President, Richard Jakoby, in conjunction with Inter Nationes.¹ At that time the contents were produced in consultation with the editorial staff of the central reference book on musical life in Germany, the *Musik-Almanach*,² which has been the responsibility of the MIZ ever since its foundation. The articles in the present volume are likewise based on material that the MIZ has long offered in the *Musik-Almanach* or its on-line Internet portal. Central topics have been revised or rewritten to meet the needs of an international readership. The articles describe the major subareas of Germany's musical life and survey their structures and recent developments. In this way they reflect central hallmarks and features of cultural

life in Germany while revealing perspectives in the areas concerned. From time to time they also shed light on the debates on cultural and educational policy currently being conducted in Germany on various political levels.

Despite the differences in their style and presentation, all the articles follow a descriptive approach basically incorporating statistical material. However, it should be borne in mind that special problems beset the evaluation, selection and communication of statistics in art and culture. First and foremost is the basic problem of how artistic phenomena subject to qualitative assessment (the creation, performance and reception of music and their underlying preconditions) can be measured with a quantitative yardstick – a problem of varying severity depending on the questions and interests involved. But quite apart from this, the quality of statistical data on culture is itself subject to many limitations from a methodological standpoint.

For example, by collecting data from a multitude of statistical sources (professional and trade associations, marketing boards, the Federal Statistical Office, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* (KMK), the Consortium of Public-law Broadcasting Institutions (ARD), private research institutes and so forth), we face problems familiar in the field of cultural statistics. Among them are the conflicting approaches, lines of demarcation and classification schemes employed in the statistics, the conflicting time spans and periods, and the different dates of publication, which vary according to the way the data are collected and assessed. These limitations also give rise to specifics in the way the statistics are classified and to differences in their representative status.

Besides statistical data, the articles also contain, for the first time, maps to illuminate the areas concerned. They convey a visual impression of Germany's musical landscape, illustrating yet again its all-embracing character, even in rural areas. All the figures are also accessible in the List of Illustrations.

In the appendix the MIZ presents, among other things, institutional addresses and contact information. Owing to shortage of space, we could only publish a tiny selection of the information available at the MIZ, which amounts to more than 10,000 institutions and facilities in Germany's musical landscape. For the same

reason we had to dispense with descriptive information on the purposes, activities and organisational structures of the institutions concerned. However, this information can be downloaded from the MIZ's Internet portal at www.miz.org in constantly updated form and with a wide range of search functions.

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- ¹ Richard Jakoby, ed.: *Musical life in Germany: Structure, development, figures* (Bonn, 1997).
- ² *Musik-Almanach: Daten und Fakten zum Musikleben in Deutschland*, ed. German Music Council, vols. 1-3 (Kassel and Regensburg, 1986-92), 4-6 (Kassel, 1995-2002), 7 (Regensburg, 2006).