

*Miriam Wendling*

**“Wir leben in einer schweren Zeit”:  
The 1917–1918 Concert Season  
of the Milwaukee Musical Society<sup>1</sup>**

At the end of American neutrality during World War I, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, had a flourishing musical scene.<sup>2</sup> It was home to a large number of singing societies and other musical groups.<sup>3</sup> The Chicago Symphony and Chicago Opera visited regularly as well. William George Bruce, in his history of Milwaukee, reported that between 1890 and 1920, over one hundred musical clubs were founded there.<sup>4</sup> The society which is to be discussed below was already well established when Bruce made his count, having been a presence in the city for more than sixty years by the time the war began.

The Milwaukee Musical Society or the Musikverein von Milwaukee was founded in 1850. In 1900, Oskar Burckhardt published a chronicle of its first fifty years entitled, *Der Musikverein von Milwaukee 1850–1900: Eine Chronik*. The foundation of the society was described thus: “Nach einer Vorversammlung in Mahler’s Weinhandlung wurde am 1. Mai 1850 der ‘Musikverein,’ oder wie man ihn, um auch die anglo-amerikanische Bevölkerung zur Theilnahme heranzuziehen, nannte ‘The Milwaukee Musical Society’ offiziell gegründet.”<sup>5</sup> It is clear from Burckhardt’s description of the foundation that the founding group was largely German-speaking. The society regularly communicated in both English and German: it seems to have produced a yearly prospectus of its planned concerts in both languages.<sup>6</sup> By 1917 it had both a men’s chorus and a women’s chorus, and also arranged occasionally for big-name soloists to perform in the city. The Society’s members came from Milwaukee and the surrounding areas, and played other roles in Milwaukee society: the President during the 1917–1918 season, Max Griebisch, was the director of the National German-American Teachers College,<sup>7</sup> while the Treasurer, Hans Koenig, was the Mayor of Wauwatosa, a town adjacent to

Milwaukee. The article below examines the Society's only complete concert season held while the United States was at war with Germany and considers the impact of the Society's German associations on the season's music.

Planning for the 1917–1918 season of the Milwaukee Musical Society began in the spring of 1917. A number of orchestras, including the Minneapolis and New York Symphonies were initially approached with the goal of organizing a festival the following spring.<sup>8</sup> By late July it seemed that organizing a festival would not be possible and a different program formed, shown in Ex. 1. In November, a concert was to be sung by Mme Johanna Gadski. Then after a long correspondence, the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra was engaged for a February 1918 concert with the choirs of the Milwaukee Musical Society, Milwaukee Männerchor, and Milwaukee Liederkrantz. Finally, two soloists from New York, Florence Hinkle-Witherspoon and Herbert Witherspoon, were engaged for a performance of Brahms's *German Requiem* in May, 1918.

A month before the season began, the Society faced its first hurdle: a wave of resignations were received in mid-October of 1917—far more than one sees among the correspondence from the 1916–1917 season and resulting in the loss of about a third of the society's 1916 membership.<sup>9</sup> Although few people state openly the reason for their resignation the Society, a good portion of the correspondence from 1917–1918 consists of duplicates of letters sent from the treasurer, Hans Koenig, to those who had given up their membership. Most of these letters are simple form letters, written in English. Koenig asked the recipient to reconsider and promised both a good season and that he would personally pick out excellent seats for the recipient. However, on one occasion he wrote to the son-in-law of a member who has recently given up tickets because he would be traveling extensively.<sup>10</sup> His letter mentioned not only the quality of the planned concerts, but also appealed to the recipient as a member of the German-American community in Milwaukee to support the cultural institution. To Richard Werner, on October 31, 1917, he wrote in English:

I am making this appeal to you on behalf of the Milwaukee Musical Society, because we need men like you to support this organization. It would be a pity if a society which has been in existence since 1850 should have to abandon its high purposes for the reason that it cannot receive the support of the German-American element, and I know that you will look at it in the same light. It seems to be tremendously difficult to interest the second generation in matters of such high artistic value as these concerts, and also the performances of the German Theatre Company at the Pabst Theatre. If the productions

The Season's Concerts of  
The Milwaukee Musical Society

at the AUDITORIUM

*First Concert*

*November 20th, 1917*



HERMANN A. ZEITZ

Soloist: Madame Gadski of the  
Metropolitan Opera House

"Inflamatus" from "Stabat Mater"

Songs by Chorus



JOHANNA GADSKI

*Second Concert*

*February 12th, 1918*



DR. ERNST KUNWALD

Joint Concert of the Milwaukee Musical Society and the Milwaukee Maennerchor, to which the services of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, with Dr. Kunwald as Conductor, have been secured.

*Third Concert*

*May 21st, 1918*



HERBERT WITHERSPOON

The Celebrated Brahms' Requiem with Florence Hinkle and Herbert Witherspoon as soloists, and with the assistance of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Mr. H. A. Zeitz, Conductor.



FLORENCE HINKLE

Image courtesy of the Milwaukee County Historical Society, Hermann Zeitz Scrapbook: Ms. 2195, vol. 3, pg. 23.

were inferior, I could understand the indifference on the part of the public, but the offerings are so artistic, and of such a high order that they are deserving of every support.<sup>11</sup>

This letter, with its particular appeal to the so-called German-American "element," shows that the Society was thinking about its identity as a German-

American society in the autumn of 1917, but does not yet exhibit the anxiety would mark later statements.

A month before the season began the Society faced trouble in the press. The *Milwaukee Sentinel* published an article on October 18, 1917, critiquing the choice of soloist for the first concert of the season. Johanna Gadski, a German soprano who had sung at Bayreuth and at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, had been engaged to sing on November 20.<sup>12</sup> The *Sentinel* titled its article, "Music Critics Divided over Gadski Issue," with the subtitle "Milwaukee Patriots Cannot Agree on Wisdom of Bringing Famous Singer Here."<sup>13</sup> At issue was not the quality of Gadski's singing, nor the planned program, but rather, the nationality of the singer. The article addressed some of the conflicts at play in Milwaukee before directly taking up the topic of Gadski's planned performance. The *Sentinel* wrote as if having summarized a number of interviews with prominent musical Milwaukeeans, "But musical Milwaukee is not narrow minded, it was that thoroughly understood immediately. It loves its Beethoven, its Wagner, and its Brahms and holds nothing against the classics because their parents happened to be of German birth."<sup>14</sup> However, the *Sentinel* continued: "But Madam Gadski. Ah; that is different. Madam Gadski has, they point out earned several large fortunes in America. Milwaukeeans question the patriotism of further swelling the Gadski coffers." Thus, in October, it seems that the *Sentinel* disagreed solely with the hiring of a German singer, but not with the performance of music by German composers.

Milwaukee's German-language daily paper, the *Germania-Herold Abendblatt* (evening edition) commented on the *Sentinel's* article in an unimpassioned tone:

In diesem Winter ist ein Konzert von Frau Johanna Gadski, der bekannten Sängerin, in Aussicht genommen worden. Diese Tatsache hat aber, wie sich jetzt herausstellt, zu einer gewissen Opposition in den hiesigen Musikkreisen geführt, weil nämlich Frau Gadski die Gattin Herrn Hans Tauscher ist, welcher in der Wellandkanal-Verschwörung angeblich verwickelt gewesen sein soll. Es wird von einigen Personen geltend gemacht, daß es nicht gerade patriotisch sein würde, das Vermögen dieser Künstlerin noch weiter anschwellen zu lassen, und behauptet, daß amerikanische Sängerinnen als Ersatz beschafft werden könnten und sollten. Aber einstimmig ist das Urteil unter den Musikern Milwaukees, daß Beethoven, Brahms, Bach, Mozart, Wagner und Strauß nicht vom Programm gebannt werden dürfen, weil sie deutsche Komponisten sind. "Wir sollten die deutschen Musikklassiker auf den Programmen beibehalten, weil wir ihnen keine Abgaben entrichten, und dadurch dem Feind helfen

könnten,” sagte einer der bekanntesten Milwaukeeer Musiklehrer. “Es wäre ganz unsinnig,” fuhr er fort, “die herrlichsten Musikwerke von dem Programm zu bannen, weil deren Verfasser in Deutschland geboren sind, aber es ist eine andere Frage, ob man feindliche Ausländer zu deren Interpretation verwenden sollte oder nicht.”<sup>15</sup>

The *Germania-Herold's* article contains some direct quotations from an unnamed “well-known” music teacher in Milwaukee, and part of one of these overlaps with a quote from the *Sentinel*, which is also unattributed.<sup>16</sup> Acceptable composers for the *Sentinel* included Beethoven, Wagner, and Brahms, to which the *Germania-Herold* added Strauss (without distinguishing between Johann or Richard) and Mozart. For a month after this, the press was quiet about the planned performance.

On November 20, 1917, just hours before the concert was to take place, the *Milwaukee Journal* published two texts relating to Gadski on the same page of its “Market Edition.” The first, under the heading “Just between us women,” is a write up of an interview with Mme. Gadski with a subheading of “Artist and Journal Girl—Gadski’s Daughter Won’t Let Mother Talk About the War.”<sup>17</sup> The *Journal's* unnamed reporter, who calls herself the “Bashful Lady,” repeatedly asks about Mme. Gadski’s sympathies, but does not receive satisfaction. The second, just below the first, is a signed letter from Edith Adams Stewart, entitled “Protest Against German Song Program.”<sup>18</sup> Stewart writes that “Germany is to be honored in song,” and unlike the *Sentinel's* article from October 1917, her protest is against the language in which Gadski would sing, rather than the singer. She writes, “Mme. Gadski is to sing six German songs and the chorus of mixed voices are to sing two German choruses. Who is responsible for these selections? Surely not an American who would feel that every time Germany is thus honored, her dagger of cruelty and crime is being turned in the hearts of our soldier boys at the front, as well as in our own.”

The program of Gadski’s concert, held at the Auditorium, included both sacred and secular works which could appeal to a wide audience. Composers of various nationalities, including four Americans, are represented and the performers sang in three languages, including English, German, and Latin.<sup>19</sup> The women’s chorus of the Musical Society sang their portion of the concert in English, while the men’s chorus sang in German. After the concert, Ella Smith published a glowing review in the *Milwaukee Journal*.<sup>20</sup> Catherine Pannill Mead likewise published a positive review in the *Milwaukee Sentinel*.<sup>21</sup> Neither critic mentioned the controversy from October, nor the previous day’s article in the *Sentinel* about the German language.

But the *Journal* did not forget Gadski's success in Milwaukee and its tone became even more aggressive in the new year. On January 13, 1918, it chided concert goers about thin attendance at a concert by a French soprano:

Many who have patronized the Gadskis, the Matzenauers and the Weisbachs and others of German antecedents in the past season are bethinking themselves of their deeds. Many bought season tickets to certain courses without inquiring first who the artists were to be. Others with easy American tolerance of things foreign, even when they are at war, attended these concerts with the idea of maintaining neutrality in art. It is said that some of those who have been constant in their attendance upon concerts in the past months were conspicuous by their absence when the great Yvette was the attraction, and many of these are said to be pro-German in sentiment. That is all past, but it is an interesting subject of speculation as to what will happen when the next artist reputed to be of German tendencies arrives. Will some who enjoyed Guilbert and noted the absence of familiar theater goers, incidentally be present?<sup>22</sup>

Margarete Matzenauer, another singer mentioned in this quote from the *Milwaukee Journal*, would be a nice point of comparison to Gadski. She sang with the A Capella Chorus at the Auditorium Theatre on December 18, 1917—just over a week after the United States declared war on the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The press would have had time to demonize Matzenauer, who was born in modern day Romania, which was then part of the Empire, if it had wanted to.<sup>23</sup> It seems to have chosen to not do so. Catherine Pannill Mead of the *Milwaukee Sentinel* reviewed the concert positively and notes that the concert was “to introduce Madame Margarete Matzenauer, contralto of the Metropolitan Opera.”<sup>24</sup> The novelty of the performer to the Milwaukee audience coupled with the position of the A Capella Chorus as a group largely devoted to the singing of sacred music (albeit often German—at least, in years past), may have been the reason for the lack of protests.<sup>25</sup>

The second planned concert of the Musical Society, planned for February 12, 1918, also fell under suspicion. In late November, 1917, Dr. Ernst Kunwald, the Austrian director of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra (CSO), had been forbidden to play in Pittsburgh and, it seems, this was troublesome for some Milwaukeeans.<sup>26</sup> On November 23, 1917, the *Milwaukee Journal* published an article in an unusual format: the text is largely an interview of Hans Koenig, the treasurer of the Musical Society, with an unknown interviewer. The paper quoted Koenig, who stated that the concert would not be cancelled. The paper then added the following text, “in spite of the fact that

the orchestra was barred from playing in Cincinnati, if conducted by Ernest Kunwald, an Austrian, its director.”<sup>27</sup>

The orchestra had not been banned in Cincinnati; however, this article appeared on November 23, 1917, the day after a concert in Pittsburgh was cancelled. The *Milwaukee Journal* then pressured Koenig on Kunwald’s citizenship saying, “You know, of course, that Dr. Kunwald is an Austrian citizen and that is why he was barred by the police from playing in Pittsburgh.”<sup>28</sup> At this point in November, however, the United States was not yet at war with Austria and this aggression on the part of the *Journal* to the Musical Society is starkly contrasted with the later lack of pre-concert comments about Margaret Matzenauer and the A Capella Chorus.

In correspondence with the manager of the CSO, Kline Roberts, Koenig asked about the citizenship of the conductor. Sadly, the manager’s answer is not found in the society’s records, but it is information that we know, as Kunwald’s later internment at camp Oglethorpe has been documented.<sup>29</sup> Koenig’s letter from November 24 to the manager of the CSO brought up local issues and touched on resistance to the society’s plans: “I am enclosing herewith a clipping taken from one of our evening papers, in regard to the proposed appearance of your orchestra in Milwaukee. This same paper is making every possible effort to discourage this concert as well as the concert which Mme Gadski gave under our auspices on the 20<sup>th</sup>. . . .”<sup>30</sup> Koenig closed the letter optimistically: “Before Gadski appeared here, we had the matter up with the Federal Department Officer at Milwaukee, and he said that he could see no reason why she should not sing, and we do not expect any trouble when your organization comes, except what trouble might arise from the propaganda conducted by the newspaper which brought the enclosed clipping.”

After Kunwald’s arrest and internment, a telegram from December 13, 1917 from Cincinnati noted, “All concerts to be given as scheduled using plan of guest conductors. . . .”<sup>31</sup> A different conductor whose citizenship was not questioned, Victor Herbert, was brought in to conduct the orchestra. The *Milwaukee Journal* announced the coming concert on February 10, 1918, writing, “This is the first time Milwaukeeans have heard the Cincinnati aggregation this season and it will be the only time they are to be heard here. In losing the former alien enemy director, Ernst Kunewald [*sic*], musicians say that the orchestra has in reality gained in prestige, as the retirement of the alien has made possible the engagement of the much stronger musician, Mr. Herbert, for several of the scheduled concerts. . . .”<sup>32</sup> However, again like Gadski’s concert, the CSO concert received excellent reviews without mention of the controversy involving Kunwald.<sup>33</sup>

The concert which might have been given by Kunwald differed from that which was eventually given by Herbert. On October 1, 1917, Koenig wrote

to Kunwald about the program and suggested Richard Strauss's *Tod und Verklärung*.<sup>34</sup> On the twenty-second of October, Koenig wrote again, this time to Kline Roberts, naming Richard Strauss's *Don Juan* and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony as the main orchestral works of the planned concert.<sup>35</sup> The final program opened with the Star Spangled Banner, and included Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, the overture and chorus of "Wach Auf" from Richard Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*, Hector Berlioz's Suite from the "Damnation of Faust," Camille Saint-Saën's "Le Rouet D'Omphale," four of Eduard Kremser's (1838–1914) "Altniederländische Volkslieder," and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's "La Bamboula". Whether the concert program changed because of Herbert's wishes, or because it had become clear that playing music by a living, German composer would be problematic, is something that cannot be ascertained.

In the winter of 1918, a controversy brewed that occupied the Musical Society for a month. A joint rehearsal in preparation for the concert with the CSO was held in January with members of the Musical Society, as well as members of the Milwaukee Männerchor and the Milwaukee Liederkrantz, during which a resolution was passed condemning the efforts to end the teaching of German in Milwaukee's schools. The *Journal* first reported on the resolution on January 31, 1918, printing the resolution itself in English, interviews with the president of the Liederkrantz (D. C. Leuning) and the secretary of the same (Frank Muth) and the names of the officers of all three societies.<sup>36</sup> The *Milwaukee Journal* ran an editorial on the resolution on February 4, 1918, entitled "Aliens and German Study."<sup>37</sup> The first point of attack for the *Journal* was that the societies did not limit membership to American citizens. The second was the teaching of German in Milwaukee's schools and it claimed that, "The compulsory study of the German language has been deliberately used to undermine America to inculcate Germanism instead of Americanism, to make America the puppet of Germany."<sup>38</sup> The *Journal* published several articles and editorials on the controversy, always arguing in favor of eliminating the teaching of German in grade schools. Interesting in this controversy is that the *Journal* ceased to refer to the Musical Society in English, as it had previously, and began calling the group the Musikverein.<sup>39</sup> The *Journal* followed this with an editorial letter addressed, "To the Members of the Milwaukee Musikverein, Männerchor, Liederkrantz, Turnverein, Bahn Frei Turnverein, and the West Side Old Settlers' Club."<sup>40</sup>

On February 28, a board member of the Musical Society reacted, sending a letter written in English to the Milwaukee press.<sup>41</sup> Hans Koenig, the treasurer, positioned himself as loyal: he had presented a resolution to the society's board and it had not found favor among the other board members.<sup>42</sup> Instead of circulating the resolution to the Milwaukee press as he had hoped, Koenig resigned from the board and a damaging open letter from him was

published on the front page of the *Milwaukee Journal* on March 1, 1918. As the mayor of Wauwatosa, Koenig found himself in an untenable position: he could not remain mayor and remain on the board of a society that would not distance itself from the January resolution. He chose, as he wrote, “the patriotic thing to do.”<sup>43</sup> We can only speculate about this situation for other members of the board. Someone such as Max Greibsch, may have found himself in an equally untenable situation. As the director of the National German-American Teacher’s College, he could hardly argue against the teaching of German in schools.

Koenig’s unpublished resolution condemned the January resolution and made the point that it was not an official action of the board of the Milwaukee Musical Society, yet stopped short of calling for an end to the teaching of German, writing instead: “BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we deeply deplore any action at this time, which has the slightest tendency to arouse the feelings of our fellow citizens in these critical times, and that we are a unit with loyal citizens of this country in carrying out the work of this government in winning the war.” That this resolution failed to find favor is perhaps somewhat surprising given the of patriotic behavior recorded in the minute book of the society’s Männerchor.<sup>44</sup> However, the situation was likely just as untenable to men like Max Greibsch, who, as the director of the National German-American Teacher’s College, would could hardly argue against the teaching of German in schools.

In the spring of 1918, arguments continued to rage between the English and German language press in Milwaukee. On the March 22, the *Milwaukee Journal* published a text from the dean of Lawrence Conservatory, Frederick Vance Evans, provocatively titled “Shall American artists die as enemy aliens entertain us?”<sup>45</sup> Evans cautioned the reader, “We should not confuse German music with the propaganda of the alien enemy artist.” Yet, on the very same page of the paper, the *Journal* has also printed an article excerpted from the *Minneapolis Journal*, which reads, “We cannot afford to be divided into groups. The rest of us cannot permit a German-American organization to propagate Deutschtum here, to Teutonize our education, to substitute German for English, or even give America two languages, and to vote not like American citizens but as subjects of the kaiser.”<sup>46</sup>

The name of the society which gave rise to the article from Minneapolis is not given and the complaints are not new: the *Milwaukee Journal* published a large number of letters to the Editor demanding that schools no longer teach German. The *Germania-Herold Abendblatt* responded to the mounting criticism with an editorial that began,

Bekanntlich wurde der Krieg Amerikas gegen die deutsche Regierung im Verlaufe des ersten Kriegsjahres gegen den Willen der amerikanischen Regierung von gewissen gehässigen Hetzern zu einem Krieg innerhalb unseres eigenen Landes ausgebeutet. Dieser Krieg wurde geführt gegen die deutsche Sprache, gegen deutsche Art und deutsches Wesen und so ziemlich gegen alles hiezulande, was ein deutschklingenden Namen führte oder vielleicht deutscher Abkunft sein konnte.<sup>47</sup>

The controversy about the German language had an effect on social life in Milwaukee and the Musical Society did not remain unscathed. On April 9, 1918, the Music Committee discussed whether or not to sing the planned Brahms *Requiem* and whether or not singing in German was a good idea.<sup>48</sup> Whether or not Koenig's resignation was on the minds of those making the decision is not discernible from the sources. On April 15, 1918, a decision was reached at a special meeting of the board and a decision was reached that the final concert would not be the Brahms *Requiem* as planned. A recital by the soloists, who had already been engaged, was substituted instead.

The decision was announced days before the concert at the society's annual meeting in May 1918. Max Griebisch addressed the group and a copy of this speech survives in the archives of the Milwaukee County Historical Society. It is clear that the position of the Society in Milwaukee, as a German-American organization, had become extremely difficult. The efforts of the English-language press to demonize the German language had had an effect on the plans of the society. Griebisch addressed the current situation and the decision to change the program:

Wir leben in einer schweren Zeit. Das, wofür der Verein in früherer Zeit mit Leib und Seele eintrat, womit er glaubte sich den Beifall des gesamten Milwaukeeer Bürgertums zu erwerben, ist heute in üblen Ruf gekommen und wird von einem großen Teile der Bürgerschaft mit Misstrauen, Missbilligung, ja Abscheu angesehen. Dies bewog uns, das Programm des dritten Konzertes der Saison, das auf den 21. d. M. gesetzt ist, umzuändern, insofern, als das deutsche Requiem von Brahms, das auch in deutscher Sprache gesungen werden sollte, vom Programm abgesetzt wurde. Wir wollten nicht der Gefahr ausgesetzt sein, nach irgend einer Seite hin Anstoß zu erregen, noch wollten wir die Aufführung des Werkes, die nur mit großer Mühe und großem Aufwand von Kosten hätte bewerkstelligt werden können, gestört sehen.<sup>49</sup>

The situation had become uncomfortable and the brave face put on by Koenig in November 1917 had disappeared by the following spring. No longer could the society defend the performance of a work by a composer who had been dead for two decades, simply because of the associations brought up by a work called *German Requiem*, sung in German. Just months before, Brahms had been brought up in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* article criticizing the engagement of Gadski as a soloist, and he, as well as Beethoven and Wagner, had been deemed acceptable—but that was before the society became embroiled in the controversy about the teaching of German. Instead, Florence Hinkle-Witherspoon and Herbert Witherspoon's program consisted entirely of solos and duets, none of which appear in German on the program and most of which were not written by German composers.<sup>50</sup>

The musical life of a city does not exist in isolation—indeed, the situation in Milwaukee underscores this—and the pressure put on German-American Milwaukee by the English-language press, in particular the *Journal*, seems to have had an effect on the Musical Society. There was an escalation—from a consternation about the engagement of a living German singer to the rejection of a piece by Johannes Brahms. This escalation is mirrored in the language used and the demands made by the English-language press in Milwaukee. The anxiety about German music appears to have risen to such a point that it continued to have an effect after the end of the war: Milwaukee's Auditorium Symphony Orchestra printed short biographical notices in its concert programs in 1920, explaining the nationality of composers.<sup>51</sup> On February 29, 1920, we read: "Waldteufel, in spite of his German name, is practically French." So great was the remaining anxiety about German associations that this Strasbourg-born composer who grew up in Paris had to be explained, lest his name raise suspicion.<sup>52</sup> Nationally, the situation in Milwaukee fits into a bigger picture as well: already in the autumn of 1917, the Nordamerikanische Sängerbund cancelled its planned 1918 meeting in Chicago and, on a grander scale, not one opera performed by the Metropolitan Opera of New York during its 1917–1918 and 1918–1919 seasons was sung in German.<sup>53</sup>

*Universität Hamburg  
Hamburg, Germany*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Kevin Abing and Steve Schaffer of the Milwaukee Country Historical Society for their friendly assistance. Previous versions of this paper were presented at the 2015 meeting of the Society for German-American Studies in St. Louis, Missouri, and in

the colloquium Aktuelle Arbeiten in der Historischen Musikwissenschaft at the Institut für Historische Musikwissenschaft of the Universität Hamburg.

<sup>2</sup> Important dates for this paper include: April 6, 1917, when President Wilson issued a formal proclamation of war after approval from the House and Senate; December 7, 1917, when the United States declared war on Austria-Hungary; and early February 1918, when members of the 32nd Division, many of whom were from Wisconsin, were sent to Europe. Some members of this division were onboard the SS *Tuscania* when it was hit on 6 February, 1918.

<sup>3</sup> I have counted more than 20 German choral groups among the pages of the *Germania Herold* over the 1917–1918 season, not including those of the Musical Society.

<sup>4</sup> William George Bruce, *History of Milwaukee: City and County*, 3 vols. (Chicago and Milwaukee: Clarke, 1922), I:679.

<sup>5</sup> Oskar Burckhardt, *Der Musikverein von Milwaukee 1850-1900: Eine Chronik* (Milwaukee: Herold, 1900), 8. [After a preliminary meeting in Mahler's wine shop, the Musikverein, or as it was called to also attract the participation of the Anglo-American public, "The Milwaukee Musical Society," was officially founded on May 1, 1850.]

<sup>6</sup> Many of these are held in the manuscript archives of the Milwaukee County Historical Society, under the shelf mark, uncategorized manuscripts of the Milwaukee Musical Society, Mss. 1763, Box 1. Hereafter, manuscript material from this box will be referred to by folder number. Bound material found under the shelf mark Mss. 1763 is listed according to the finding aid of the MCHS.

<sup>7</sup> Nationales Deutschamerikanisches Lehrerseminar.

<sup>8</sup> See Mss. 1763, folder 3.

<sup>9</sup> Membership lists from February 1, 1916 indicate that the Society had 243 members; a list from May 1, 1918, indicates that by then, the Society had just 162 members, see Mss. 1763, folder 23.

<sup>10</sup> Letter from the Treasurer to Richard Werner, October 31, 1917, Mss. 1763, folder 3.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Gadski sang with the Metropolitan Opera in New York between 1900 and 1917, having previously sung with the Damrosch Opera Company. See Desmond Shawe-Taylor, "Gadski, Johanna," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* [hereafter *New Grove*], 2nd Edition, vols. 1–29 (New York: Macmillan, 2001), 9: 408.

<sup>13</sup> No author, "Music Critics Divided over Gadski Issue," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, October 18, 1917, 15.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> No author, "Johanna Gadski: Gegen ihr Auftreten hier macht sich Opposition geltend," *Germania-Herold Abendblatt*, October 18, 1917, 12. [This winter, a concert by Johanna Gadski, the well-known singer, has been planned. But this fact, as has become apparent, has led to some opposition in local musical circles, because Mme. Gadski is the wife of Mr. Hans Tauscher, who was supposedly involved in the Welland Canal Affair. Some hold that it would not be patriotic to contribute to the wealth of this artist and assert that an American singer could and should be substituted. Yet Milwaukee's musicians are unanimous in their judgement that the music of Beethoven, Brahms, Bach, Mozart, Wagner and Strauß should not be banned from programs because they are German composers. "We should keep the German classics on programs because we pay no fees to them that could help the enemy," said one of the most well-known music teachers in Milwaukee. "It would be completely nonsensical," he continued, "to ban the most glorious musical works from the program because the composer was born in Germany, but it is another question, whether or not one should use enemy aliens for their interpretation."] Because the *Germania-Herold* is not widely available, quotations from this paper are often given at length.

<sup>16</sup> See "Music Critics Divided," at "We may have our German classics," explained one local instructor, "because we pay Germany no royalties on them and in no way aid the enemy,"

*The 1917–1918 Concert Season of the Milwaukee Musical Society*

which corresponds closely (if not identically) to “Wir sollen die deutschen Musikklassiker...”, as in note 14.

<sup>17</sup> No author, “Just Between us Women: Artist and Journal Girl—Gadski’s Daughter Won’t Let Mother Talk About the War,” *Milwaukee Journal*, 11.20.1917, 6.

<sup>18</sup> Edith Adams Stewart, “Protest Against German Song Program,” *Milwaukee Journal*, 11.20.1917, 6.

<sup>19</sup> American composers include Edward MacDowell, Alexander McFadyen, Francis Moore, and Henry Hadley. For a short biography of Wisconsin-born Alexander McFadyen, see *The Wisconsin Blue Book*, ed. William A. Anderson and William J. Anderson (Madison: Democrat, 1929), 98. See also, Richard Crawford, “Edward MacDowell: Musical Nationalism and an American Tone Poet,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol. 49, no. 3 (Autumn, 1996), 528–60; Herbert R. Boardman, *Henry Hadley: Ambassador of Harmony* (Atlanta GA: Emory University/Banner, 1932) 19; and Ellis O. Moore, *Francis Moore: a Musicians’s Life* (Bloomington IN: Xlibris, 2007)

<sup>20</sup> Ella Smith, “Versatile Voice,” *Milwaukee Journal*, November 21, 1917, 12.

<sup>21</sup> Catherine Pannill Mead, “Gadski’s Singing Charms Audience,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, November 21, 1917, 3.

<sup>22</sup> No author, “Week’s music includes much of interest – Students appear,” *Milwaukee Journal*, January 13, 1918, 24.

<sup>23</sup> Margaret Matzenauer was born in Romania (Temesvár, now Timișoara) to German parents and studied in Graz and Berlin, see Philip Lieson Miller, “Matzenauer, Margaret(e),” *New Grove*, 16: 152.

<sup>24</sup> Catherine Pannill Mead, “Tribute is Paid to Singer’s Ability,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, December 19, 1917, 4.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, Mead reports that Matzenauer sang three songs by Handel, “Italian songs from Scarlatti to Verdi”, and three French songs. The Chorus’s program appears to have been entirely in English.

<sup>26</sup> No author, “Austrian can play here,” *Milwaukee Journal*, November 23, 1917, 31. The Austrian violinist, Fritz Kreisler, had also been forbidden to play in Pittsburgh in November, 1917 (Frederick Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War I* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974), 248).

<sup>27</sup> “Austrian can play here,” 31.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Edmund A. Bowles, “Karl Muck and His Compatriots: German Conductors in America during World War I (And How They Coped),” *American Music*, 25.4 (Winter, 2007) 405–440, at 418.

<sup>30</sup> Correspondence from Koenig to Roberts, November 24, 1917, Mss. 1763, folder 3.

<sup>31</sup> Telegram from December 13, 1917, Roberts to Koenig, Mss. 1763, folder 3.

<sup>32</sup> No author, “Victor Herbert to Direct,” *Milwaukee Journal*, February 10, 1918, part 2, 8.

<sup>33</sup> Catherine Pannill Mead, “Herbert Pleases Large Audience,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, February 13, 1918, 3; Ella Smith, “Gets the Shades: Audience Like Herbert as Leader,” *Milwaukee Journal*, February 13, 1918, 6.

<sup>34</sup> Correspondence from Koenig to Kunwald, October 1, 1917, Mss. 1763, folder 3.

<sup>35</sup> Correspondence from Koenig to Roberts, October 22, 1917, Mss. 1763, folder 3.

<sup>36</sup> No author, “Fight to Retain German Study,” *Milwaukee Journal*, January 31, 1918, 4.

<sup>37</sup> Editorial, “Aliens and German Study,” *Milwaukee Journal*, February 4, 1918, 12.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> See the reviews of the Gadski and Herbert concerts above.

<sup>40</sup> Editorial, “German Societies, Let Us Reason Together!” *Milwaukee Journal*, February 11, 1918, 12.

<sup>41</sup> The text of the resolution preserved in a typescript in Ms 1763 (LC2), Minute book of the board of the Milwaukee Musical Society, 1916-1925, 46. Hans Koenig's resignation from the board written in English and in pencil is found on a loose slip of paper between this p. 46 and p. 47 of the same.

<sup>42</sup> Koenig's letter is printed under the headline, "Quits Musical Society Office as Patriotic Duty," *Milwaukee Journal*, March, 1, 1918, 1.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* One could speculate as to why the other board members did not support Koenig's resolution—and while it is not known which way the individual members voted, one might consider that the president, Max Griebisch, was the head of the German teaching-training institute in Milwaukee. Perhaps accepting Koenig's resolution would have been just as problematic for someone in such a position, as remaining on the board was for Koenig.

<sup>44</sup> The Society recorded some of its patriotic actions in its minute books – the Männerchor had purchased a so-called "service flag" with stars for those members of the choir currently serving (Mss. 1763, Minutes of the Männerchor of the Musical Society, 1907–1924, June 3, 1917), 163.

<sup>45</sup> Frederick Vance Evans, "Shall American Artists Die as Enemy Aliens Entertain Us?" *Milwaukee Journal*, March 22 1918, 14, reprinted from, *Music News Chicago* (date and page not given).

<sup>46</sup> No author, "To America Alone," *Milwaukee Journal*, March 22, 1918, 14, reprinted from, *Minneapolis Journal* (author, date, and page not given).

<sup>47</sup> Editorial, "Im Dienste der Freiheit," *Germania-Herold Abendblatt*, April 9, 1918, 6. [It is well-known that during the first year of the war against the German government, against the will of the American government, the war has been exploited by certain hateful rabble-rousers into a war in this country. This war is being fought against the German language, against German nature and character, and it appears, against anything in this country that carries a German-sounding name or which perhaps could be of German origin.]

<sup>48</sup> Ms 1763 (LC2), Minute book of the board of the Milwaukee Musical Society, 1916–1925, 48.

<sup>49</sup> Typescript, Mss. 1673, folder 4. [We live in a difficult time. That, for which in earlier days, the Society worked with heart and soul, with which it hoped to win over the approval of the whole of Milwaukee, has today received a bad reputation and a large portion of society regards it with skepticism, disapproval, and abhorrence. This moved us to change the program of the third concert this season, which is set for the 21st of the month, in as much as the Brahms Requiem, which would have been sung in German, has been removed. We did not want to take the risk of causing offense, nor did we want to see the performance of the work, which would have been possible only with great effort and cost, destroyed.]

<sup>50</sup> Concert program from May 21, 1918, Mss. 1763, folder 56, unnumbered. Ella Smith's review notes "The program was almost entirely in English, with a sprinkling of Italian and French" ("Final Concert is Given at the Auditorium," *Milwaukee Journal*, May 22, 1918, 2).

<sup>51</sup> Scrapbook of Hermann Zeitz, conductor of the Auditorium Symphony Orchestra (as well as the Milwaukee Musical Society), Milwaukee County Historical Society, Mss. 2195, 112, program from February 29, 1920.

<sup>52</sup> Andrew Lamb, "Waldteufel [Lévy], (Charles)-Émile," *New Grove* 27: 9–10.

<sup>53</sup> No author, "Sängerfest Verschoben," *Germania-Herold Abendblatt*, November 20, 1917, 6, and William H. Seltsam, *Metropolitan Opera Annals: A Chronicle of Artists and Performances* (New York: Wilson, 1947), 310–335. Operas by Wagner, Beethoven, and Strauss are absent during these seasons.