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PIANOMUSIC

BY **AXEL BORUP-JØRGENSEN**

ERIK KALTOFT PIANO & CELESTA

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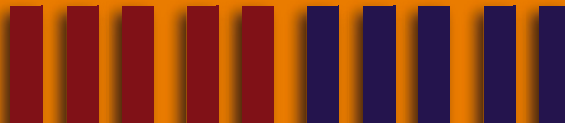


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Gennem mere end 45 år var Axel Borup-Jørgensen en del af mit musikerliv. Han var en flittig koncertgænger og i forbindelse med koncerter, hvor jeg medvirkede, var han ofte til stede og kommenterede altid loyalt og vidende musikken og udførelsen. Aldrig bedrevende, men nænsomt og med stor indlevelse.

I perioder hvor hans egne værker var programsat, blev samværet særligt fokuseret. Uropførelser såvel som genopførelser. Her blev hele hans viden og parathed mobiliseret, lige fra korrektioner af klanglige detaljer til indføring i de udsøgt kalligraferede partiturer. Altid i et positivt samarbejde om det bedst mulige kunstneriske resultat. Hans venlige men kompromisløse kommentarer, sigtede altid mod at hjælpe musikerne til forståelse af det enkelte værks identitet.

Axel Borup-Jørgensen var uddannet pianist, og klaveret går som en rød tråd gennem hele hans produktion. I de store orkesterværker og i hovedparten af hans kammermusikværker har klaveret ofte en central rolle. Antallet af værker for soloklaver er derimod forholdsvis begrænset. Disse viser til gengæld hans stilistiske udvikling, fra de tidligste værker til mødet med Webern i 1950'erne og frem til en afklaret personlig stil. Hans viden om og fornemmelse for instrumentet, afspejler sig i partitureernes detaljerighed, hvor anslagsarter og dynamisk differentiering har en fremskudt plads. Inspirationskilder har i høj grad været betydelige lyrikeres digte, og naturens foranderlighed. Især vinteren, med det rene lys og snekrystallerne, har fundet genklang i hans forfinede tonesprog. En anden inspirationskilde var vand. Ikke de store brådsøer men snarere de fine krusninger. Pausen har altid fået en betydningsfuld plads i den underspillede retorik og gestik. Axel Borup-Jørgensens stemme i dansk musikliv er ikke højtråbende, men til gengæld virker hans neddæmpede udsagn nok så stærke med deres lavmælte insisteren på detaljens vigtighed.

Erik Kaltoft



For more than 45 years, Axel Borup-Jørgensen was a part of my life as a musician. He was a frequent concert-goer, and in connection with concerts in which I was participating, he was often present and always commented faithfully and knowledgeably on the music and the performance. Never in a superior way, but carefully and with much empathy.

During periods when his own works were on the programme, our time together was particularly focused. First performances as well as subsequent performances. Here his entire knowledge and readiness was mobilised – everything from corrections of sound details to an introduction into his exquisitely calligraphed scores. Always in a spirit of positive cooperation so as to achieve the best possible artistic result. His friendly but uncompromising comments always sought to help the musicians understand the distinctive identity of the individual work.

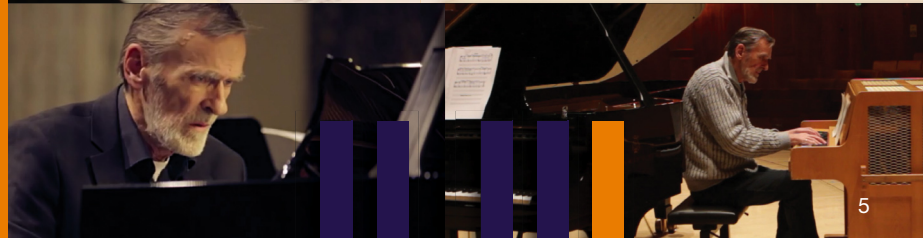
Axel Borup-Jørgensen was a qualified pianist, and the piano runs like a thread through his entire production. In the large orchestral works and in most of his chamber music works the piano often has a central role.

The number of works for solo piano, on the other hand, is relatively limited. These, though, show his stylistic development, from the earliest works to the meeting with Webern in the 1950s and on to a clear personal style. His knowledge of and feeling for the instrument is reflected in the richness of details in the scores, where different types of touch and dynamic differentiation occupy a prominent position.

To a great extent, sources of inspiration have come from the poems of important poets, and the changeability of nature. Winter in particular, with its clear light and snow crystals is re-echoed in his sophisticated musical idiom. Another source of inspiration was water. Not the great high-crested waves but more the delicate ripples. The pause has also always had an important place in his underplayed rhetoric and gesture.

Axel Borup-Jørgensen's voice in Danish musical life is not vociferous, but despite this his toned-down statements have plenty of strength, with their subdued insistence on the importance of detail.

Erik Kaltoft



“Thalatta! Thalatta!” Opus 127 (1987-88)

“Havet! Havet!” Sådan skulle en græsk hær have jublet for mange, lange år siden, da de så Sortehavet efter et fejlslagent felttog – “Thalatta! Thalatta!” Siden er udråbet blevet citeret i Joyces *Ulysses* og mange andre litterære værker. I Borup-Jørgensens værk *Thalatta! Thalatta!* fra 1987 er der små overskrifter, der indikerer havets stemning undervejs i værket. Først står der: The Sea lies bright far away, senere Somewhat decreasing wind, derefter The Sea lies again bright and calm og endelig kommer en post-epilogue: like a slow & calm swell. Det er altså ikke det voldsomme, urolige eller overvældende hav, der er emnet for værket her; det er det rolige, glitrende, klare og fredelige hav. De bløde, brudte akkorder, der præger de to afsnit, der hedder The Sea lies bright far away og The Sea lies again bright and calm er fortryllende og fascinerende og ind imellem kommer så de skøjte lysglimt, der præger afsnittet Somewhat decreasing wind. Der er ikke en klar opdeling af de to musikalske ideer mellem afsnittene, men en overvægt af bløde akkorder i yderafsnittene og af de lysglimtende akkordstrejf i midterafsnittet.

Med afsnitstitler, der taler om et fredeligt hav og en umiddelbart enkel opbygning af musikken, skulle man tro, at det var et næsten meditativt værk. Men der foregår meget under overfladen, præcis som i det rigtige hav. Akkorderne er utilnærmeligt mystiske, og der er intet umiddelbart mødekommende ved klangerne. Det er som om musikken, som havet, indeholder dybder, vi kun langsomt kan komme til at forstå.

Marine skitser (1-6) Opus 4b (1949)

De seks *Marine skitser* er komponeret lang tid før *Thalatta! Thalatta!*. Der er næsten 40 år mellem de to kompositioner, men ikke desto mindre er der mange ligheder. Ikke mindst med den sjette og sidste skitse. Lighederne handler ikke udelukkende om musikalsk stil eller konkrete musikalske sammenfald (begge dele kan findes), men også om emnevalget: Havet. Imellem disse to klaverstykker med inspiration fra havet komponerede Borup-Jørgensen sit eneste store orkesterværk, *Marin*. *Marin*, der blev komponeret i årene 1963-70, er en milepæl i dansk musikhistorie, og hver en tone i værket er, om man så må sige, en spejling af havets dybder, lyset på overfladen, de konstante bevægelser, faunaen og mystikken, som havet viser os. På mange måder er det det samme hav, der beskrives i de seks *Marine skitser* og i *Thalatta! Thalatta!* Hver skitse er et lille karakterstykke, og det er fristende at pege på, at hver skitse er et billede af et særskilt aspekt ved havet, men det vil være at forenkle musikken unødigt. Borup-Jørgensen var i hele sit liv, fra de tidligste til de seneste værker, en lyrisk komponist. Han formåede, selv i de mest kantede værker at formidle en organisk, fortællende historie, eller at vise et erkendelsesrigt øjeblik. Det er disse øjeblikke, man kan finde i *Marine skitser*. De klinger undervejs af inspiration fra fjernøsten, af bølgeskvulp og skrig fra havfugle, og der er en mere fersk tilgang til materialet end i de senere værker, men poesien og det billedskabende er til stede, som strøg fra en kalligrafi-mesters hånd.



winter pieces for klaver (1-4) Opus 30b (1959)

Borup-Jørgensens lyriske og naturinspirerede musik kunne også – med elegance – presses ned i aforismens form. Korte, intense musikalske udsagn, der står som krystaller og glitrer. Sådan et værk er *winter pieces* fra 1959. *winter pieces* består af fire satser og en lille epilog, og en yderst vigtig medspiller i alle satserne er stilheden. Pauserne betyder altid lige så meget som de klingende toner i musik, men i disse fire vinterstykker har pauserne deres eget liv og er ikke fyldt med ingenting, men ejer deres egen uro og rytmiske prægnans. Musikken er ladet med energi på trods af, at der ikke er klingende udtryk hele tiden; noget af energien ligger i stilheden.

Karakteristisk for Borup-Jørgensens egen opfattelse af sin musik som fortsættelsen af en lang musikalsk tradition, skulle han selv have nævnt netop disse stykker, som værende i samme tradition som Griegs *Lyriske stykker for klaver*, og på trods af det mere moderne udtryk, er der lyrik og intensitet nok i disse frostklare klaverstykker til, at udsagnet giver god mening.

sommer intermezzi Opus 65 (1971)

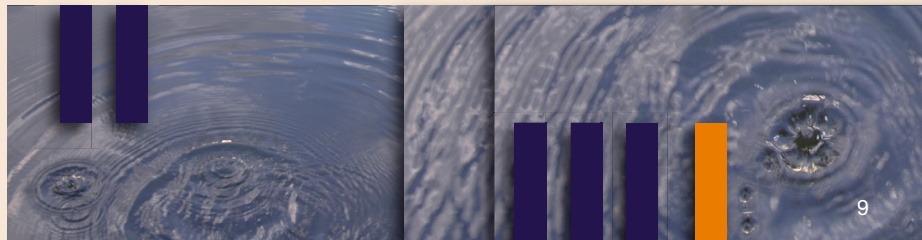
sommer intermezzi fra 1971 er et mere abstrakt og på sin vis distant værk end de lyriske klaverstykker inspireret af havet. Borup-Jørgensen var selv pianist og musikken her bærer en klar fornemmelse af komponistens fascination af selve flyglets klangmuligheder. Selvom der optræder musikalske figurer, der ligner flere fra både de tidligere og senere klaverværker på denne cd, så er disse sommer-intermezzi mere klangligt fokuserede og måske de mindst lyriske af værkerne. Stemningsmæssigt er man som lytter tættere på fornemmelsen som Alice har i sommervarmen en sløv eftermiddag i Lewis Carrolls elskede børnebog *Alice i Eventyrland*, end med en frisk skandinavisk sommereftermiddag. Der er kogleri til stede.

Passacaglia for klaver Opus 2b (1948)

En *passacaglia* er en musikalsk form fra barokken, der især er kendetegnet ved en fast, tilbagevendende baslinje, eller en fast akkordgang. Borup-Jørgensens *Passacaglia* er et af hans tidligste værker, det har nummer 2b i hans opusrække; værket, der har nummer 2a, er en *Passacaglia* for strygeorkester. *Passacaglia*en, der er komponeret året før *Marine skitser*, er et enkelt, stemningsfuldt værk, der med tyngde får tegnet et næsten majestætisk musikalsk monument på trods af stykkets ringe længde.

regndråbe interludier Opus 144 (1994)

Hentydningen i titlen på dette værk er ikke til at tage fejl af; det er *Regndråbe præludiet* af Chopin, der spøger i baggrunden. Rent musikalsk er det dog temmelig langt i baggrunden. Borup-Jørgensens regndråbemellemspil er nærmere en musikalsk pendant til H. C. Andersens historie om, hvad man kan se af liv i en enkelt dråbe vand med et forstørrelsesglas. I stedet for at forstørre rent visuelt, så fokuserer Borup-Jørgensen på, hvordan en regndråbe lyder. Med et lyd-forstørrelsesglas åbner han for en hel verden af sarte dryp, væld af dryp, gentagelser, overflader der rammes af dryp og uregelmæssige og velklingende kaskader af dryp.



epigrammer Opus 78 (1976)

Den brudte akkord, der, naturstridigt, flyder opad er næsten en signaturakkord for Borup-Jørgensen, og også i de stramme epigrammer for klaver fra 1976 findes denne akkordbrydning opad, der er med til at få os lyttere til at spidse øren. Dette værk er på mange måder et samlende værk for mange af de karakteristika, der kendetegner hans klavermusik. Der er et legende lys, en nysgerrighed, der er stor vægt på stilhed som en stemme i musikken, og der er kontrasterne mellem det flydende – den brudte akkord – og de krystalskarpe akkorder. Der er glæden ved det organisk voksende og der er den urbane elegance. *epigrammer* er små, skarpe digte, der ofte leverer en pointe med et smæk. Det sidste er ikke nødvendigvis Borup-Jørgensens stil, men den stramme, karakteristiske form dyrker han til perfektion i disse korte epigrammer. Undervejs i noderne findes udtryksbeskrivelser som "voldsomt & overraskende", "firbensagtigt rykvis" og "krystalsplintrede kaskader".

Miniaturesuite (Praeludium, Fantasia, Interludium, Sarabande, Praeludium) Opus 3b (1949)

Denne lille suite er endnu et tidligt værk, kort og fyndigt og fuld af energi. Formen er, som i flere af Borup-Jørgensens tidlige værker, hentet fra barokmusikken, hvor en suite er en samling af ofte kontrasterende dansesatser. Komponisten har endda valgt at give de enkelte satser navne, der i endnu højere grad bringer tankerne hen på tidligere tiders musik, og selvom tonesproget ikke på noget tidspunkt minder om barokmusik, er det et vidnesbyrd om, hvor stærkt Borup-Jørgensen følte, at han var en del af en ubrydelig tradition. På trods af tidernes skiftende tonesprog – og Borup-Jørgensen var på ingen måde bange for at eksperimentere eller for at være moderne – så var han altid af den opfattelse, at han byggede videre på en etableret tradition. Selv i dette tidlige værk kan denne holdning høres.

Praeludier for klaver (1-7) Opus 30a (1958-59)

Værket her deler opusnummer med *winter pieces* og er altså også komponeret i 1958-59. De syv præludier er væsensforskellige i udtryk og er alle meget stærke i deres udtryks klarhed. Gennem alle præludierne benytter Borup-Jørgensen virtuost dynamikken, fra kraftigste forte til svageste pianissimo, som en art tredimensionel rumbeskrivelse. Kontrasterne mellem de kraftige og svage akkorder og passager giver ekkovirkninger og fornemmelsen af, at noget af lyden er placeret længere væk end andet. Det er virtuost gjort og effekten er, lidt ligesom i Karlheinz Stockhausens samtidige *Kontakte*, at musikken befolkes af figurer, der optræder forskellige "steder" i musikken – nogle i forgrunden andre bagved, nogle i bevægelse andre stillestående. Det bliver levende og myldrende musik for et enkelt instrument.

"Phantasiestück" for celesta Opus 115 (1985)

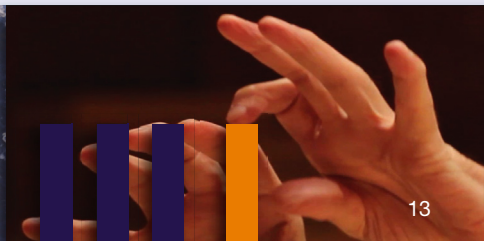
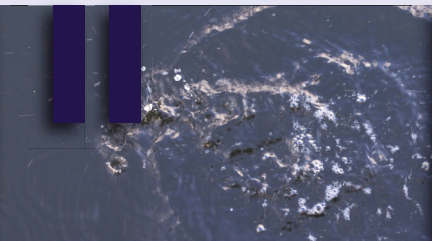
Som med et slag bliver man ved den første akkord transporteret til et land befolket af flørlette alfer, mystiske, flyvende figurer og dryppende, farverige blomster. Klangens af celesten alene er nok til at antyde et fortryllet lydlandskab, men når det bliver kombineret med Borup-Jørgensens opad-flydende, brudte akkorder og karakteristiske dryppende klange er forvandlingen total. En del af de karakteristiske figurer fra klaverværkerne optræder også i dette fantasistykke, men det musikalske udtryk er et ganske andet dels på grund af instrumentet, men også fordi Borup-Jørgensen forstår at skrive for instrumentet, så det undervejs bliver løsrevet fra den fortryllede have og begynder at lyde som elektronmusik fra en anden planet. Titlen på værket her peger tilbage i musikhistorien til mængder af værker med titler, hvor ordet fantasi indgår, og den virker umådelig velvalgt til dette stykke, fordi musikken meget håndfast tvinger lytteren ud på en rejse væk fra virkeligheden og ud i det usikre, mystiske og lokkende.

“Thalatta! Thalatta!” Opus 127 (1987-88)

“The Sea! The Sea!” That is what a Greek army is said to have jubilantly shouted many long years ago when they glimpsed the Black Sea after an abortive campaign – “Thalatta! Thalatta!”. Much later, this cry was quoted in Joyce’s *Ulysses* and many other literary works. In Borup-Jørgensen’s work *Thalatta! Thalatta!* from 1987, there are small headings that indicate the mood of the sea at various points in the work. Firstly, it says: The Sea lies bright far away, later, Somewhat decreasing wind and later still, The Sea lies again bright and calm, and finally there is a post-epilogue: like a slow & calm swell. So it is not the violent, restless or vast ocean that is the subject of this work – it is the calm, glittering, clear and peaceful sea. The soft arpeggios that characterise the first two sections, which are called The Sea lies bright far away and The Sea lies again bright and calm are enchanting and fascinating, with interspersed skimming, glimmering shafts of light that typify the section Somewhat decreasing wind. There is no clear division of the two musical ideas between the sections, but a preponderance of quiet chords in the outer sections and of the shimmering chords like shafts of light in the middle section. With section headings that speak of peaceful sea and an immediately simple musical structure, one might perhaps think that this was an almost meditative work. But a great deal takes place beneath the surface, just as with the real sea. The chords are remotely mysterious, and there is nothing immediately accommodating about the sounds. It is as if the music, like the sea, contains depths we only slowly can come to understand.

Marine skitser (*Marine sketches*) (1-6) Opus 4b (1949)

The six *Marine sketches* were composed long before *Thalatta! Thalatta!*. There is a period of almost 40 years between the two compositions, yet despite this there are many similarities. Not least with the sixth and final sketch. The sketches do not exclusively have to do with the musical style or actual musical coincidences (though both are present), but also with the choice of subject: The Sea. Between these two piano pieces inspired by the sea Borup-Jørgensen composed his only large-scale orchestral work *Marin*. *Marin*, which was composed in the years 1963-70, marks a milestone in Danish musical history, and every note in the work is, if it is possible to say this, a reflection of the sea’s depths, the light on the surface, the constant motion, the fauna and the mystery that the sea shows us. In many ways it is the same sea that is described in the six *Marine sketches* and in *Thalatta! Thalatta!*. Each sketch is a small character piece, and it is tempting to point out that each sketch is an image of a particular aspect of the sea, but this would be to simplify the music unnecessarily. Throughout his life, from the earliest to the final works, Borup-Jørgensen was a lyrical composer. Even in his most angular works, he managed to convey an organic, narrative story, or to show a moment of inner illumination. It is these moments that can be found in *Marine Sketches*. At times they sound as if they have been inspired by music from the Far East, by lapping waves and the cries of sea birds, and there is a fresher approach to the material than in the later works, but the poetry and image-creating quality are both present – like strokes from a master of calligraphy’s hand.



winter pieces (1-4) Opus 30b (1959)

Borup-Jørgensen's lyrical and nature-inspired music could also, with elegance, be condensed into the form of the aphorism. Short, intense music statements that stand like glittering crystals. Such a work is *winter pieces* from 1959. It consists of four movements and a brief epilogue – and an extremely important partner in all the movements is silence. The pauses always mean just as much as the notes to be heard in the music, but in these four pieces the pauses have their own life and are not full of nothingness; they possess their own unrest and rhythmical significance. The music is charged with energy despite the fact that not everything is expressed in sound the whole time – part of the energy lies in the silence.

Typical of Borup-Jørgensen's own conception of his music as a continuation of a long musical tradition, it is said that he himself mentioned precisely these pieces as belonging to the same tradition as Grieg's *Lyrical Pieces* for piano, and despite a more modern mode of expression, there is enough lyricism and intensity in these frost-clear piano pieces for that statement to make very good sense.

sommer intermezzi (*summer intermezzi*) Opus 65 (1971)

summer intermezzi from 1971 is a more abstract and in a way distant work than the lyrical piano pieces inspired by the sea. Borup-Jørgensen was himself a pianist and the music here conveys a clear feeling of the composer's fascination with the actual sound possibilities offered by the grand piano. Although musical figures, that resemble those from both earlier and later piano works on this CD, are featured, these summer intermezzi are more stringently focused sound-wise and perhaps the least lyrical of the works. In terms of atmosphere, one is closer as a listener to the feeling that Alice has in the summer heat on a sleepy afternoon in Lewis Carroll's much-love children's book *Alice in Wonderland* than with a fresh, Scandinavian summer afternoon. There is enchantment in the air.

Passacaglia for klaver (*Passacaglia for piano*) Opus 2b (1948)

A passacaglia is a musical form from the Baroque, particularly characterised by a fixed, recurring bass line, or a fixed progression of chords. Borup-Jørgensen's *Passacaglia* is one of his earliest works, with the opus number 2/2; the work that has opus number 2/1 is a Passacaglia for string orchestra. The Passacaglia, which was composed the year before the *Marine sketches*, is a simple evocative work that with gravity manages to attain an almost majestic musical monumentality despite its short length.

regndråbe interludier (*raindrop interludes*) Opus 144 (1994)

There is no mistaking about the reference in the title of this work: it is Chopin's *Raindrop* prelude that haunts in the background. Although musically speaking, it is fairly far off in the background. Borup-Jørgensen's *raindrop interludes* are almost a musical counterpart to Hans Christian Andersen's story of all the life that can be seen in a single drop of water through a magnifying glass. Instead of magnifying purely visually, Borup-Jørgensen focuses on what a raindrop sounds like. With a sound-magnifying glass he opens up a whole world of gentle drops, a host of drops, repetitions, surfaces that are struck by drops and irregular and melodious cascades of drops.



epigrammer (*epigrams*) Opus 78 (1976)

The arpeggios which, contrary to nature, ripple upwards are almost a chord signature for Borup-Jørgensen, and these upward arpeggios are also to be found in the austere *epigrams* for piano from 1976, something which causes us as listeners to prick up our ears. In many ways, this work is a collection of many of the characteristics that typify his piano music. There is a playful light, a curiosity, great emphasis on silence as a voice in the music, and there are the contrasts between the flowing – the arpeggio – and the crystal-sharp chords. There is the joy in what grows organically and there is an urban elegance. Epigrams are small, pithy poems that often have a sting in the tail. The “sting in the tail” is not necessarily Borup-Jørgensen’s style, but he cultivates the rigorous, characteristic form to perfection in these short epigrams. There are such markings in the music as ‘violently and surprisingly’, ‘jerkily lizardlike’ and ‘like crystal-splintering cascades’.

Miniauresuite (Praeludium, Fantasia, Interludium, Sarabande, Praeludium) Opus 3b (1949)

This little suite is yet another early work, short and terse and full of energy. As in other early works by Borup-Jørgensen, the form has been taken from Baroque music, where a suite is a collection of often contrasting dances. The composer has even chosen to give the individual movements names which to an even greater extent make one think of music of earlier times, and even though the tonal language does not at any point remind one of Baroque music, it nevertheless reveals how strongly Borup-Jørgensen felt that he was part of an unbreakable tradition. Despite the changing tonal language over the centuries – and Borup-Jørgensen was not at all afraid of experimenting and being modern – he always believed that he was adding to an established tradition. This attitude is audible even in this early work.

Praeludier for klaver (*Preludes for piano*) (1-7) Opus 30a (1958-59)

This work share its opus number with *winter pieces* and was thus also composed in 1958-59. The seven preludes differ considerably in their forms of expression, and all of them are very powerful in the clarity of their expression. Throughout, Borup-Jørgensen makes virtuoso use of dynamics, from the loudest forte to the softest pianissimo, as a kind of three-dimensional spatial description. The contrasts between the loud and soft chords and passages produce echo effects and a feeling that some parts of the sound have been positioned farther away than other parts. This is done with great virtuosity and the effect, as in Karlheinz Stockhausen’s contemporary *Kontakte*, is that the music is populated by figures that appear at various ‘loci’ in the music – some in the foreground, others behind them, others in motion, others standing still. It becomes live, teeming music for a single instrument.

“Phantasiestück” for celesta Opus 115 (1985)

As if at one blow, one is transported by the first chord to a land populated by elves light as gossamer, mysterious flying figures and dripping, colourful flowers. The sound of the celesta is enough in itself to conjure up an enchanted soundscape, but when combined with Borup-Jørgensen’s upward-flowing arpeggios and characteristic dripping sounds, the transformation is total. Some of the characteristic figures from the piano works also appear in this fantasia, but the musical idiom is completely different, partly because of the instrument but also because Borup-Jørgensen understands how to write for the instrument so that en route it is plucked out of the enchanted garden and starts to sound like electronic music from another planet. The title of the work points backwards in musical history to a host of works with titles that include the word fantasy, and it seems highly appropriate for this piece, because the music very firmly compels the listener to travel far away from reality, out into the uncertain, the mysterious and the enticing.

Axel Borup-Jørgensen blev født i Hjørring d. 22. november 1924, men voksede op i Sverige hvortil hans familie flyttede, da han var 2½ år gammel. Efter nogle års omflakken slog familien sig ned i Mjölby, hvor Axel kom i skole. Faderen var en opfindernatur, og hans kreativitet gik i arv til sønnen. Helt fra drengeårene spillede han flere instrumenter efter gehør: mundharmonika, lille harmonika, mandolin og klaver. I mellemskolen spillede han sammen med et par klassekamerater, og de optrådte ofte til klassefester. Som skoledreng udviklede Axel sig til en imponerende tegner, han interesserede sig for astronomi og drømte om at blive ingeniør eller arkitekt.

Vendingen mod den klassiske musik kom i 1942 hvor drengens klaverlærer - efter forgæves at have søgt at vække hans interesse for operette- og populærmusik - præsenterede ham for den langsomme sats af Beethovens *Måneskinssonate*. "Det var som en åndelig verden der åbnede sig og virkede nærmest som en religiøs omvendelse." Herefter blev klaverspillet Axel Borup-Jørgensens altoverskyggende interesse. Han tilbragte dagligt mange timer ved klaveret i stedet for at lege, og som gymnasieelev i det nærliggende Linköping brugte han skolens sportsdage til at rejse til Stockholm og få klaverundervisning. På repertoireet stod bl.a. Griegs *Lyriske Stykker* som nogle af de klassisk-romantiske værker der stod i centrum af gymnasiastens musikalske univers.

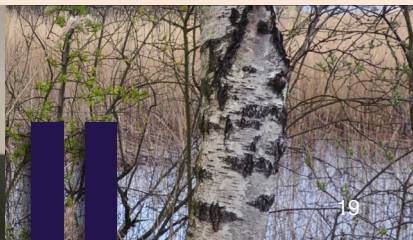
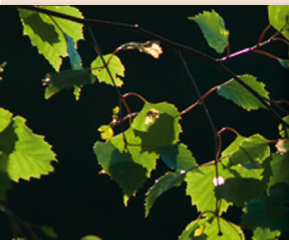
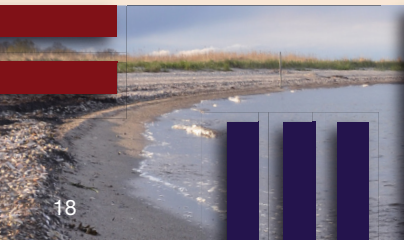
Ved siden af musikken var den svenske natur en kilde til oplevelser og inspiration for Axel Borup-Jørgensen. Familien erhvervede i 1942 den lille Björkö i søen

Sommen på grænsen mellem Östergötland og Småland. Her gik, cyklede og roede Borup-Jørgensen lange ture i sommerferierne og fordybede sig i den særlige stilhed der karakteriserer det vidtstrakte og øde landskab. En stilhed som man ofte mener at kunne genkende i Axel Borup-Jørgensens musik.

1946 vendte Borup-Jørgensen tilbage til Danmark som studerende ved Det Kgl. Danske Musikkonservatorium med klaver som hovedfag og supplerende timer i instrumentation. Denne undervisning var - sammen med Niels Viggo Bentzons indføring i musikkens former - afgørende for at komposition efter 1948 overtog klaverspillets rolle som det centrale i Axel Borup-Jørgensens kunstneriske gerning.

Han bevarede sin tilknytning til Sverige og tilbragte mange somre på Björkö, og han var en flittig læser af svensk litteratur: Frem til midten af 1950'erne især 1890'ernes forfattere som Verner von Heidenstam, E. A. Karlfeldt og Gustav Fröding. Senere spillede mere modernistiske lyrikere som Karl Vennberg og den finlands-svenske avantgardedigter Gunnar Björling en betydelig rolle for hans tidlige udvikling fra et romantisk-impressionistisk udgangspunkt mod en mere aforistisk stil. Ifølge Bo Wallner var påvirkningen fra moderne lyrik vigtigere for ham end den samtidige moderne musik.

Efter musikpædagogisk eksamen etablerede Axel Borup-Jørgensen sig som klaverlærer. Han underviste på institutioner og havde privatelever, og sammen med familiære forpligtelser var det med til at isolere ham fra miljøet for ny musik i København. En skilsmisse bragte i 1958 ændring i hans familiære situation og



betød, at han kunne vie mere tid til den ny musik. 1959 tog han til den moderne musiks europæiske Mekka, Darmstadt, hvor han fik en bekræftelse på den udvikling, han var inde i med f.eks. *Praeludierne for klaver* op. 31,1 (1958-59). Han spillede nogle af dem ved et af Wolfgang Fortners kurser, og Fortner mente at Axel Borup-Jørgensens udvikling "virkede rigtig".

Igen i 1962 var Borup-Jørgensen i Darmstadt, men han vendte hverken tilbage som serialist eller som elektronkomponist. Han var allerede på sporet af sin egen tidssvarende udtryksform, og Darmstadt betød for ham ikke et opbrud, men en bekræftelse, hvor ikke mindst Ligetis tidlige orkesterværker med deres stærkt opdelte strygerstemmer var en inspiration for orkesterværkerne fra 1960'erne.

I offentligheden blev Borup-Jørgensen især kendt da han med *Nordisk Sommerpastorale* vandt førsteprisen i den konkurrence om et kort orkesterværk, som Danmarks Radio afholdt 1964 under stor mediebevågenhed. Med førsteprisen fulgte en bestilling på et stort orkesterværk i anledning af Radiosymfoniorkestrets 40-års jubilæum, nemlig værket *Marin* som Borup-Jørgensen arbejdede på frem til 1970, hvor det blev uropført af Herbert Blomstedt og Radiosymfoniorkestret, præmieret af det internationale Rostrum of Composers i Paris og spillet af Francis Travis og Stockholm Filharmonikerne som afslutningsværk på Nordiske Musikdage 1978.

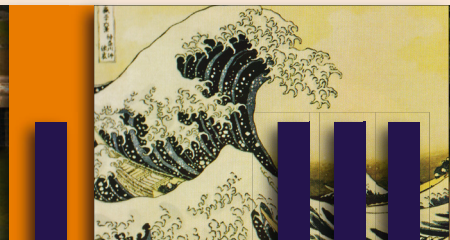
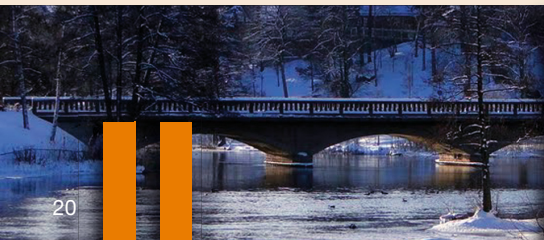
Marin blev en milepæl for Axel Borup-Jørgensen som komponist. Kompositionen og renskrift af partitur og stemmer krævede en enorm arbejdsindsats – omkring

6500 timer eller mere end 3 normale arbejdsår hvoraf hovedparten blev ydet ved 16 timers daglig indsats i 1969 og 70. Efter *Marin* undgik Borup-Jørgensen de store orkesterbesætninger med stærkt opdelte strygerstemmer og koncentrerede sig i stadig højere grad om kammermusikalske besætninger.

Derimod mærkes den tendens mod en enklere udtryksform – det være sig modernismens "ny-enkelhed" eller en neo-klassicisme – som prægede dansk musik efter 1970'erne ikke i Borup-Jørgensens værker. Hvor der er tale om enkelhed skyldes det pædagogiske hensyn til amatørmusikere eller studerende, enten som decideret undervisningsmusik eller som udarbejdelsen af et musikalsk materiale i versioner af forskellig sværhedsgrad.

Axel Borup-Jørgensen levede et stilfærdigt liv som komponist, klaverlærer og flittigt koncertgænger. Han fortsatte med at udvikle sin personlige stil frem til sin død 15. oktober 2012, gerne i tæt samarbejde med instrumentalister der kunne hjælpe ham med at realisere hans ideer om nye spillemåder og nye klangmuligheder fra traditionelle instrumenter som blokfløjte eller guitar. Med den konsekvens og vedholdenhed der i mere end 60 år karakteriserede hans musik, arbejdede han sig frem mod en stadig øget klarhed, koncentration og nuancering af udtrykket.

Axel Borup-Jørgensen/Jens Brincker.



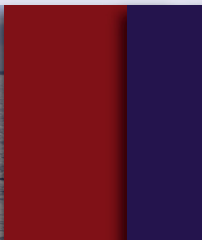
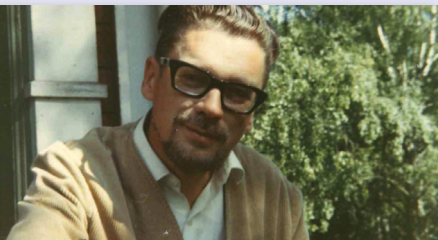
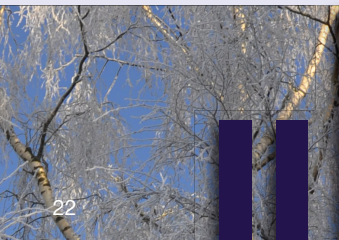
Axel Borup-Jørgensen was born in Hjørring on 22 November 1924, but grew up in Sweden, which his family moved to when he was 2½ years old. After a few years' nomadic existence, the family settled in Mjölby, where Axel went to school. His father was an inventor by nature and his creativity was inherited by his son. From his early boyhood, he was able to play several instruments by ear: mouth organ, small accordion, mandoline and piano. In junior school he played together with a couple of class-mates, and they often performed at class parties. As a schoolboy, Axel developed into an impressive drawer, he was interested in astronomy and dreamt of becoming an engineer or an architect.

The shift towards classical music came in 1942, when the boy's piano teacher – after having tried in vain to arouse his interest in operetta and popular music – presented him with the slow movement from Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*. 'It was as if a spiritual world opened up, almost with the effect of a religious conversion.' After this, piano playing became Axel Borup-Jørgensen's overriding interest. He spent many hours every day at the piano instead of playing, and as an upper secondary student in nearby Linköping he used the school's sports days to travel to Stockholm and get piano teaching. His repertoire included Grieg's *Lyrical Pieces* as well as some of the classical-romantic works that were at the centre of the young man's musical universe.

Alongside music, Swedish nature was a source of experiences and inspiration for Axel Borup-Jørgensen. In 1942, the family acquired the small island of Björkön in lake Sommen on the border between Östergötland and Småland. Here Borup-Jørgensen used to walk, cycle and row on long trips during the summer holidays and lose himself in the special stillness that characterises the open expanses of deserted countryside – a stillness that often seems to be recognisable in Axel Borup-Jørgensen's music.

In 1946, Axel Borup-Jørgensen returned to Denmark as a student at The Royal Danish Academy of Music, with the piano as his main subject and supplementary lessons in instrumentation. This teacher – together with Niels Viggo Bentzon's introduction into the various forms of music – was of decisive importance in causing composition to take over the role of piano playing after 1948 as his key musical activity.

He retained his connection with Sweden and spent many summers on Björkön. He was also a diligent reader of Swedish literature. Up to the mid 1950s, this reading focused on such writers as Verner von Heidenstam, E. A. Karlfeldt and Gustav Fröding. Later on, more modernist lyricists such as Karl Vennberg and the Finland-Swedish avant-garde poet Gunnar Björling played an important part in his development from an early romantic-impressionist position to a more aphoristic style. According to Bo Wallner, the influence of modern poetry was more important to him than contemporary modern music.



After passing his music teaching examination, Axel Borup-Jørgensen established himself as a piano teacher. He taught at institutions and had private pupils and this, combined with family obligations, tended to isolate him from the environment for new music in Copenhagen. A divorce in 1958 brought about a change in his family situation and meant that he was now able to devote more time to new music. In 1959, he travelled to the European mecca of modern music, Darmstadt, where he found confirmation for the development he was undergoing in, for example, his *Preludes for Piano* op. 31,1 (1958–59). He played some of them at one of Wolfgang Fortner's courses, and Fortner felt that Axel Borup-Jørgensen's development 'seemed to be the right one'.

Borup-Jørgensen returned to Darmstadt in 1962, but he did not return as a serialist or electroacoustic composer. He was already in pursuit of his own corresponding form of expression, and Darmstadt did not mean a new departure for him but a confirmation, where the early orchestral works of Ligeti in particular, with their strictly divided string voices, were an inspiration for the orchestral works from the 1960s.

Borup-Jørgensen became especially known among the general public when his *Nordic Summer Pastoral* won first prize in the competition for a short orchestral work held by Danmarks Radio in 1964, with extensive media coverage. The first prize also included a commission for a large orchestral work for the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Danish National Symphony Orchestra. This work, *Marin*, Borup-Jørgensen worked on until 1970, when it was given its first performance by the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Herbert Blomstedt, was awarded a prize by the international Rostrum of Composers in Paris, and was played by Francis Travis and The Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra as the concluding work at Nordic Music Days in 1978.

Marin was a milestone for Axel Borup-Jørgensen as a composer. The composition and the fair copy of the score and voices required an enormous amount of work – about 6,500 hours, or more than three normal years of work – the main part of which comprised a daily work-load of 16 hours in 1969 and 1970. After *Marin*, Borup-Jørgensen avoided works for large orchestras with strictly divided string voices, concentrating to an increasing extent on chamber music ensembles.

Nevertheless, the tendency towards a simpler mode of expression – be it modernism's 'neo-simplicity' or a neo-classicism – which was typical of Danish music after the 1970s – is not apparent in Borup-Jørgensen's works. If simplicity is there, it is due to pedagogical considerations being taken of amateur musicians or students, either in the form of music designed specifically for teaching purposes or as the preparation of musical material in versions of varying levels of difficulty.

Axel Borup-Jørgensen lived a quiet life as a composer, piano teacher and avid concert-goer. He continued to develop his personal style until his death on 15 October 2012, and he liked to collaborate with instrumentalists who could help him realise his ideas about new ways of playing and new sound possibilities that could be obtained from traditional instruments such as the recorder and guitar. With a consistency and perseverance that characterised his music for over 60 years, he worked towards an ever-increasing clarity, concentration and fine graduation of expression.



Erik Kaltoft har fået sin pianistiske og musikalske uddannelse på Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium og har perspektiveret den i Frankrig hos Yvonne Lefébure. Hans musikalske profil er karakteriseret ved et højt aktivitetsniveau – både som solist, kammermusiker og akkompagnatør. Som medlem af kammermusikgrupperne The Elsinore Players og LINensemble har han turneret i Sydamerika, Japan, Korea, Kina, Vietnam og de fleste europæiske lande.

Interesseområderne Ny musik, Kammermusik og Vokalmusik har altid haft afgørende indflydelse på repertoire, ligesom disse interesser har ført til mange forskellige indsatser i musiklivet. Kunstnerisk leder af Århus Sinfonietta og dommer i Danmarks Radios kammermusikkonkurrence. Administrativt engagement i bl.a. Århus Sommeropera, Det danske Musicalakademi Fredericia og talentkonkurrencen Unge Sangere Ikast.

Erik Kaltoft har medvirket ved uopførelsen af mere end 200 værker – hovedsagelig danske, og sammen med en lang række cd-indspilninger med overvejende ny musik, heriblandt en række cd'er med klavermusik af bl.a. Per Nørgård, Gunnar Berg og Bent Lorentzen, dokumenterer disse udfoldelser en påtrængende interesse for Ny-tid og Nu-tid.

Efter en lang årrække som docent ved Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium var Erik Kaltoft i perioden 2005-2010 ansat som professor ved Det Fynske Musikkonservatorium i Odense.

Erik Kaltoft studied music and piano at The Royal Academy of Music Aarhus/Aalborg, subsequently adding a further perspective by studying under Yvonne Lefébure in France. His musical profile is characterised by a high level of activity – both as a soloist, chamber musician and accompanist. As a member of the chamber music groups The Elsinore Players and LINensemble he has toured in South America, Japan, Korea, China, Vietnam and most European countries.

The special fields of New Music, Chamber Music and Vocal Music have always had a crucial influence on his repertoire, and these interests have led to many different ventures within musical life. Art director of Århus Sinfonietta and adjudicator

in Denmark's Radio's chamber music competition. Administrative involvement in such activities as Århus Summer Opera, The Danish Musical Academy in Fredericia and the talent competition Young Singers Ikast.

Erik Kaltoft has been involved in the first performance of more than 200 works – many of them Danish.

Together with a large number of CD recordings of mainly new music, including some with piano music by such composers as Per Nørgård, Gunnar Berg and Bent Lorentzen, all such activities document his driving interest in the present and present-day music.

After many years as assistant professor at The Royal Academy of Music Aarhus/Aalborg, Erik Kaltoft held the position of professor from 2005 to 2010 at The Danish National Academy of Music in Odense.





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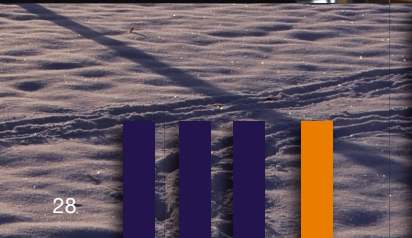
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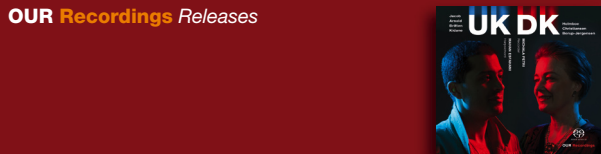
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Pyramix DAW system with Tango Controller. Monitored on B&W 802 Diamond speakers.

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The Royal Danish Academy of Music for making it possible to record in the wonderful Concert Hall and to Danish National Symphony Orchestra for the use of their celesta.



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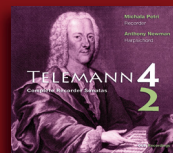
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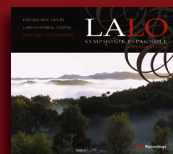
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