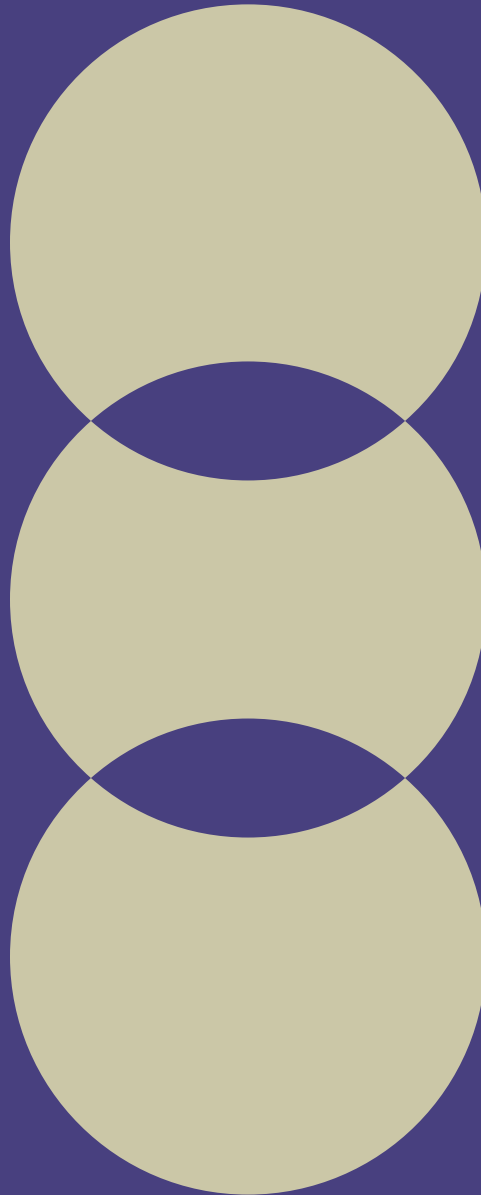


Nancy Dalberg

Symphony



Copenhagen Phil

Thomas Dausgaard

Nancy Dalberg (1881–1949)

Symphony in C sharp minor

Copenhagen Phil

Conducted by Thomas Dausgaard

Symphony in C sharp minor (1917)

1	I. Moderato	11:23
2	II. Andante sostenuto	8:40
3	III. Rondo	5:26

Total 25:30

World premiere recording



Nancy Dalberg

An Unheard Whole

By Lisbeth Ahlgren Jensen

Nancy Dalberg's Symphony in C sharp minor was first performed at a concert in the Odd Fellow Palace in Copenhagen on 14 January 1918. Carl Nielsen, who had been Dalberg's composition teacher for some time, stood at the head of the orchestra that had been assembled for the occasion. In the run-up to the concert, the event attracted considerable interest, as Nancy Dalberg was the first woman in Denmark to have a symphony performed. Many of the newspaper reviewers attended accordingly and wrote extensively about the event. For several, however, the most sensational thing was that a woman had managed to compose music in such a monumental genre and had handled the task as well as a man. Others pointed to the composer's musical ideas, saying that they were not broad enough to be developed in a symphonic form. They also said, finally, that the work lacked connections between its three movements, so might be regarded as a suite rather than a symphony.

It is true that the symphony's three movements do not share material, but seen as a whole, they do follow the traditional patterns of a conventional symphony: a quick, content-heavy first movement, a slow central movement of more introspective character and a lively final movement of a lighter character.

The first movement is marked *Moderato*, and begins with a slow introduction in which a lyrical melody in the woodwind floats above a muted accompaniment in the strings, in the distant key of F minor. Thereafter the strings take the lead with a hectic syncopated motif in C sharp minor, marked *Allegro vivo*. After a great surge of energy that gradually draws in every section

of the orchestra, the woodwind melody from the introduction returns, first on the horn and then in the woodwind section. The movement resists any clear formal label; at most, one might call it episodic, built up from the exposition of the two ideas described above, the lyrical woodwind melody and the hectic syncopated string motif. Both ideas are worked out in the movement, motivically and harmonically, both on their own and together. But the opposing forces are never brought together, as one might have expected in a symphonic first movement. We can see, in this incident-rich movement, Dalberg's love of detailed thematic work, the prominent use of the horn as a leading melodic instrument and the recurring use of passages orchestrated like chamber music.

The second movement, marked *Andante sostenuto*, has the character of a funeral march and is characterised by a hesitant, nearly questioning motif on bassoon and flute. This is answered by the strings and, with new contributions from the woodwind, it develops into a long spun-out melody which, for long stretches, plays out as a duet between the flute and bassoon, supported by the viola. The time signature changes during the course of the movement, whose middle section is in 5/4. It has the character of a rocking, calm elegy, played by the flute and clarinet against the background of a muted figure in the violins. After a return to the questioning motif and to even metre, the violins introduce a new counter-theme consisting of four falling notes which, for a time, dominates the musical flow until a twisting chromatic passage in the strings swings up to a strong closing wave of energy, while a lighter mood prevails through to the muted final chords.

The third movement is a sweeping, brilliant *Rondo*, marked *Vivace*. A short, energetic motif sounds in the strings first, accompanied by *tutti* chords on the unaccented beats, giving the

returning *ritornello* its character. By way of introduction, the strings chase each other hectically: when they come together, the woodwind take over and continue until trumpet fanfares declare an end to the lively game. The following episode is a regular canon between the strings, built on the energetic motif in a major-key variant before a yearning melody emerges on the woodwind and violas. Soon the whole orchestra is drawn into a broadly scored passage, underpinned by rich harmony. It is a fine display of Dalberg's gifts as an orchestrator, with every instrument taking changing roles as the music unfolds. After a chromatic descent in the tuba and lower strings, the introductory *ritornello* motif re-enters, now further intensified with a counter-motif accented across the metre. The yearning melodic section returns, then the canonic motif becomes the starting point for a festive finale in which the full strength of the orchestra unleashes the energy that has built up. This extrovert final movement inverts the expressive atmosphere of the symphony: where the first two movements have a feeling of unease, absence of resolution and sadness, the finale opens a completely different and life-affirming space.

The first performance of the symphony was also the only complete performance in the composer's lifetime. Perhaps as a response to the critical reception which had focused on the absence of connections between the movements, the composer later had the second and third movements separated from their symphonic context, giving them the title *To stykker for orkester* ('Two Pieces for Orchestra'), Op. 9. In this form they received further performances in 1935 and 1946.

Nancy Dalberg (1881–1949), born Hansen, spent part of her youth on her parents' estate, Mullerup on Funen, where she probably came into contact with the composer Hilda Sehested, twenty years her senior, on the adjacent estate, Broholm. Private

musical gatherings were a normal part of social life there, bringing together family members and professional musicians alike. Nancy Dalberg, too, received such a musical training that, after studying the piano with the pianist Ove Christiansen, she was able to play at concerts. But she was hit by persistent tendonitis in her hand and gave up playing the piano at a high level. At the same time she began to study music theory and composition privately with, amongst others, the Norwegian conductor and composer Johan Svendsen and then later with Carl Nielsen. Over time she and Nielsen became personal friends, and she would at times even assist him with his instrumentation and the copying of parts.

Her first compositions comprised songs which, in part, she wrote in collaboration with her husband, Erik Dalberg. But she also wrote purely instrumental works for cello or violin and piano before completing her first string quartet in 1914. This was played shortly afterwards, at a private concert at her home, where she became nearly euphoric with happiness. The experience gave her the courage to take on the larger instrumental forms. In 1915 she wrote *Scherzo* for string orchestra, and in the following years the single-movement orchestral work *Capriccio*, together with the Symphony in C sharp minor recorded here. Her output also includes two more string quartets, as well as *Arabisk musik fra Sahara* ('Arabic Music from the Sahara'), 1928, for oboe, viola and drum, together with a number of songs. Many of these works received only one or two performances, which Nancy Dalberg herself often helped to arrange and finance. Of the few women who made any mark as composers at the time, including Hilda Sehested and Tekla Griebel Wandall, Dalberg was the only one who took on writing a symphony. So far as we know, no other Danish woman has taken up the genre since.

Only now, more than a hundred years after its premiere, can we hear Nancy Dalberg's symphony as she intended: three movements in a symphonic whole. Whether the ideas are broad enough for the symphonic form, and whether the three movements cohere into a whole or, as the reviewers thought, rather a suite, we can finally judge for ourselves.

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Lisbeth Ahlgren Jensen is a musicologist and author specialising in historical Danish female composers, as well as an editor and researcher in Danish music history.

Copenhagen Phil, known in the summer as Tivoli Copenhagen Phil, serves as the regional orchestra for the entire island of Zealand and maintains an active international touring schedule. From its origins with H.C. Lumbye in 1843, the orchestra has grown from a 22-piece ensemble into a full-time symphony orchestra performing annually for both domestic and international audiences. Copenhagen Phil regularly collaborates with international soloists and conductors and is recognised as one of Denmark's most versatile and innovative orchestras. Thomas Dausgaard is the orchestra's Honorary Guest Conductor.

The orchestra also has a long tradition of combining the highest level of classical performance with innovative and experimental concert experiences. This includes formats such as '60 Minutes', where the orchestra collaborates with artists across different genres, as well as 'Open Orchestra', which allows the audience to move freely among the musicians. The orchestra is also behind the award-winning concert performances 'Afgørende øjeblikke' ('Crucial Moments') and the symphonic genre hybrid 'Melodrama', which is staged with acting, singing, and newly composed music wrapped in a spectacular video scenography. Educational outreach and work with children and young people are central, emphasising sensory and experience-based learning that fosters a lasting relationship with art and culture.

Danish conductor **Thomas Dausgaard** is internationally acclaimed for his deep and original musicianship, his innovative programming and an extensive catalogue of critically acclaimed recordings. He trained in piano, composition and conducting in Copenhagen, continued at the Royal College of Music in London under Norman Del Mar, and was appointed assistant conductor to Seiji Ozawa at the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which launched his international career.

As a guest conductor he has worked with many of the world's leading orchestras, among them the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, the Vienna Symphony and the Cleveland and Philadelphia Orchestras, and he appears regularly at festivals such as the BBC Proms and Salzburg. He is Principal Guest Conductor of the RTVE Symphony Orchestra and Chorus and Honorary Guest Conductor of the Copenhagen Phil, following his tenure as Chief Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (2016–2022) and long partnerships with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra and the Danish National Symphony Orchestra. He is also known for his 'Roots' programmes, which set classical works alongside folk, klezmer, gamelan and other traditions.

Dausgaard's long association with Dacapo Records has produced some of his most significant recordings. With the Danish National Symphony Orchestra he set down the first complete cycle of Rued Langgaard's sixteen symphonies, based on the critical edition and widely regarded as a landmark in Danish music, together with Langgaard's visionary choral and orchestral works around *Music of the Spheres* and the opera *Antikrist*, whose DVD was named 'DVD of the Year' at the 2005 International Internet Awards. For the same label he has recorded the symphonies of Per Nørgård, orchestral works by Carl Nielsen and music by Bent Sørensen. In March 2025 Dausgaard published his first collection of poems, *Flaskepost*.



Thomas Dausgaard

Et uhørt hele

Af Lisbeth Ahlgren Jensen

Nancy Dalbergs Symfoni i cis-mol blev førsteopført ved en koncert i Odd Fellow Palæet i København den 14. januar 1918. I spidsen for orkestret, der var sammensat til lejligheden, stod Carl Nielsen, der i nogen tid havde været Nancy Dalbergs lærer i komposition. Der var på forhånd skabt stor spænding om koncerten, fordi Nancy Dalberg var den første kvinde i Danmark, der fik en symfoni opført. Mange dagbladsanmeldere mødte følgelig op og skrev udførligt om begivenheden. Flere fremhævede dog mest det sensationelle ved, at en kvinde formåede at komponere musik i en så monumental genre og havde løst opgaven lige så godt som en mand. Andre pegede på, at komponistens musikalske idéer ikke var bredt nok anlagt til at kunne udvikles i en symfonisk form. Endelig blev det sagt, at da der ingen indbyrdes sammenhæng var mellem de tre satser, kunne værket lige så vel betragtes som en suite.

Symfoniens tre satser deler ganske rigtigt ikke materiale, men overordnet set følger den dog et traditionelt mønster med en indholdstung førstesats i hurtigt tempo, en langsom midtersats med et mere indadvendt udtryk og til sidst en livlig sats af en lettere karakter.

Første sats har karakteren 'Moderato' og begynder med en langsom indledning, i hvilken en lyrisk melodi i træblæserne toner frem over et dæmpet strygerakkompagnement i den fra grundtonearten fjernt liggende toneart f-mol. Derpå tager strygerne føringen med et hektisk synkoperet motiv i 'Allegro vivo', der sætter ind i cis-mol. Efter en stor energiudladning, som alle instrumentgrupper efterhånden tager del i, dukker den

indledende træblæsermelodi op igen – først i horn og så i træblæsergruppen. Satsen kan vanskeligt henføres til en bestemt form, men er nærmest episodisk opbygget efter ekspositionen af de to nævnte idéer, henholdsvis den lyriske træblæsermelodi og det hektisk synkoperede strygermotiv. Begge idéer bearbejdes satsen igennem motivisk og harmonisk, hver for sig og simultant. Men de modsatrettede kræfter forenes aldrig, sådan som man kunne have forventet i en symfonisk førstesats. Man bemærker i denne begivenhedsrige sats Dalbergs forkærlighed for minutiøst tematisk arbejde, en fremtrædende brug af horn som melodiførende instrumenter og tilbagevendende, nærmest kammermusikalsk instrumenterede afsnit.

Anden sats, betegnet 'Andante sostenuto', har karakter af en sørgemarch og kendetegnes af et forsigtigt, nærmest spørgende motiv i fagot og fløjte. Det besvares i strygerne, og med træblæsernes fornyede indsats udvikles det til en langt udspunden melodi, der over lange stræk udspiller sig som en duet mellem fløjte og fagot sekunderet af bratsch. Også i denne sats skifter taktarten undervejs, således at et midterafsnit i 5/4 har karakter af en vuggende, blid elegi, der klinger i fløjte og klarinet på baggrund af en dæmpet violinfiguration. Efter en tilbagevenden til det spørgende motiv og lige taktart introducerer violinerne en ny modstemme bestående af fire faldende toner, der for en tid dominerer forløbet, indtil satsen med kromatisk snørklede passager i strygerne svinger sig op til en kraftfuld, afsluttende energibølge, hvor en lysere stemning gør sig gældende frem til de afdæmpede slutakkorder.

Tredje sats er en fejende flot Rondo i tempoet 'Vivace'. Et kort, energifyldt motiv, der først klinger i strygerne ledsaget af tutti-akkorder på ubetonede taktslag, kendetegner den tilbagevendende ritornel. Indledningsvis jager strygerne hektisk hinanden, og når de finder sammen, overtager træblæserne

og fortsætter, indtil trompetfanfarer gør en ende på den kåde leg. I den følgende episode udspiller der sig en regulær kanon mellem strygerne, byggende på det energifyldte motiv i en variant i dur, hvorpå en smægtende melodi manifesterer sig i træblæsere og bratsch, og snart er hele orkestret inddraget i et bredt orkestreret forløb, båret af en fyldig, harmonisk understøttelse. Det er samtidig et fornemt eksempel på Nancy Dalbergs instrumentationskyndighed, idet alle instrumenterne her tildeles skiftende roller i det musikalske forløb. Efter en kromatisk nedgang i tuba og de dybe strygere sætter det indledende ritornelmotiv ind igen, men nu yderligere intensiveret med et modmotiv, der betones på tværs af taktrytmene. Herpå gentages også den smægtende melodisektion, hvorpå kanonmotivet gøres til udgangspunkt for en festlig finale, der med fuld orkestral styrke udlader den ophobede energi. Med denne udadvendte finalesats vendes der op og ned på symfoniens stemningsmæssige udtryk: Hvor der i de to første satser hersker en stemning af uro, uforløsthed og tristesse, åbner finalen et helt andet livsbekræftende rum.

Den første opførelse blev samtidig den eneste komplette opførelse i komponistens levetid. Men, måske som en konsekvens af de kritiske bemærkninger om satsernes manglende indre forbindelse, lod hun senere anden og tredje sats udskille af den symfoniske sammenhæng og gav dem betegnelsen *To stykker for orkester*, op. 9. I denne skikkelse opnåede de yderligere opførelser i 1935 og 1946.

Nancy Dalberg (1881-1949), født Hansen, tilbragte en del af sin ungdom på forældrenes gods Mullerup på Fyn, hvor hun antagelig kom i kontakt med den 20 år ældre komponist Hilda Sehested på det nærliggende gods Broholm. Her holdt man som led i en selskabelig omgangsform private musikalske sammenkomster med deltagelse af familiemedlemmer og profes-

sionelle musikere. Også Nancy Dalberg gennemgik en sådan musikalsk uddannelse, at hun efter klaverstudier hos pianisten Ove Christiansen kunne spille ved koncerter. Men da hun blev ramt af en hårdnakket seneskedehindebetændelse, opgav hun at spille klaver på højt plan. Samtidig begyndte hun privat at studere musikteori og komposition hos blandt andre den norske dirigent og komponist Johan Svendsen og senere hos Carl Nielsen, som hun efterhånden udviklede et personligt venskab med, og til tider endog assisterede med instrumentation og stemmeudskrivning.

Hendes første kompositioner omfatter sange, som hun til dels skabte i samarbejde med sin mand, Erik Dalberg. Men også rent instrumentale værker for cello eller violin og klaver prøvede hun kræfter med, før hun i 1914 færdiggjorde sin første strygekvartet. Da den kort efter blev spillet under en privat koncert i hendes hjem, blev hun næsten euforisk af glæde, og oplevelsen gav hende mod på at tage fat på større instrumentale former. I 1915 skrev hun *Scherzo* for strygeorkester og de følgende år det ensatsede orkesterværk *Capriccio* samt den her indspillede Symfoni i cis-mol. Hendes produktion omfatter yderligere to strygekvartetter, *Arabisk musik fra Sahara* (1928) for obo, bratsch og tromme samt en række sange. Mange af disse værker opnåede kun en enkelt eller et par opførelser, og ofte skete det ved koncerter, som Nancy Dalberg selv var med til at arrangere og finansiere. Blandt de få kvinder, der overhovedet gjorde sig bemærket som komponister i samtiden – herunder Hilda Sehested og Tekla Griebel Wandall – var hun den eneste, der prøvede kræfter med at skrive en symfoni. Ingen dansk kvinde har så vidt vides senere taget genren op.

Først nu, mere end 100 år efter premieren, foreligger symfonien som Nancy Dalberg selv tænkte den: tre satser i ét symfonisk hele. Om idéerne er anlagt bredt nok til den symfoniske form, og

om de tre satser udgør en helhed eller – som anmelderne mente
– snarere en suite, kan eftertiden endelig afgøre på egen hånd.

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*Lisbeth Ahlgren Jensen er musikforsker og forfatter med fokus
på historiske danske kvindelige komponister samt redaktør og
forsker i dansk musikhistorie.*

Copenhagen Phil, om sommeren kendt som Tivoli Copenhagen Phil, fungerer som landsdelsorkester for hele Sjælland og har desuden et aktivt internationalt koncertprogram. Fra den spæde begyndelse med H.C. Lumbye i 1843 har orkestret udviklet sig fra 22 musikere til et fuldtidssymfoniorkester, som hvert år spiller for et både hjemligt og internationalt publikum. Copenhagen Phil arbejder tæt sammen med internationale solister og dirigenter og fremstår som et af Danmarks mest alsidige og innovative orkestre. Thomas Dausgaard er orkestrets æresgæstedirigent.

Orkestret har en lang tradition for at forene klassisk musik på højeste niveau med nyskabende koncertoplevelser. Den omfatter formater som "60 Minutes", hvor orkestret samarbejder med kunstnere på tværs af genrer, samt "Open Orchestra", hvor publikum kan bevæge sig frit blandt musikerne. Orkestret står også bag de prisvindende koncertforestillinger "Afgørende øjeblikke" og den symfoniske genrehybrid "Melodrama", som er iscenesat med skuespil, sang og nykomponeret musik indhyllet i en spektakulær videoscenografi. Pædagogiske aktiviteter og arbejde med børn og unge er centrale med fokus på sanselig og erfaringsbaseret læring, der skaber langvarige relationer til kunst og kultur.

Den danske dirigent **Thomas Dausgaard** er internationalt anerkendt for sit dybe og personlige musikalske udtryk, sin nytænkende programlægning og en omfattende række roste indspilninger. Han er uddannet i klaver, komposition og direktion i København, videreuddannet ved Royal College of Music i London hos Norman Del Mar og blev assisterende dirigent for Seiji Ozawa og Boston Symphony Orchestra, hvilket indledte hans internationale karriere.

Som gæstedirigent har han arbejdet med mange af verdens førende orkestre, blandt andet Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Wiener Symfonikerne samt Cleveland- og Philadelphia-orkestrene, og han optræder jævnligt ved festivaler som BBC Proms og Salzburg. Han er førstegæstedirigent for RTVE's symfoniorkester og -kor og æresgæstedirigent for Copenhagen Phil efter sin tid som chefdirigent for BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (2016-2022) og mangeårige samarbejder med Svenska Kammarorkestern og DR Symfoniorkestret. Han er desuden kendt for sine Roots-programmer, der sætter klassiske værker i samspil med folkemusik, klezmer, gamelan og andre traditioner.

Dausgaards mangeårige samarbejde med Dacapo Records har frembragt nogle af hans mest betydningsfulde indspilninger. Med DR Symfoniorkestret indspillede han den første samlede cyklus af Rued Langgaards seksten symfonier, baseret på den kritiske udgave og bredt anset som et hovedværk i dansk musik, sammen med Langgaards visionære kor- og orkesterværker omkring *Sfærernes musik* og operaen *Antikrist*, hvis dvd blev kåret som DVD of the Year ved International Internet Awards i 2005. For samme selskab har han indspillet Per Nørgårds symfonier, orkesterværker af Carl Nielsen og musik af Bent Sørensen. I marts 2025 udgav Dausgaard sin første digtsamling, *Flaskepost*.

Copenhagen Phil

Violin 1

Jon Gjesme
Dmitri Vaskovich
Andreas Orlowitz
Anne Ngoc Søe
John Bak Dinitzen
Laura Aaberg Kærn
Robert Vadasz
Maria Stabrawa Rabenberg
Emily Fowler
Erik Danciu
André Pereira
Vasilisa Koroleva
Cecilie Emtoft
Alba Thilo Nielsen

Violin 2

Kirstine Futtrup
Charlotte Ullner
Helene Munch-Andersen Bordonaro
Idinna Alsbirk Lützhøft
Cæcilie Holst Andersen
Andrea Gyarfas
Morten Lyngs
Gabriel Coxner
Ingegerd Deckert
Cassandra Andrea Juul
Isabelle Bania

Viola

Eva Katrine Dalsgaard
Kathryn Ridley
Bernd Rinne

Charlotte Poulsen Kragh

Rasmus Nørby
Dasha Auer
Alva Rasmussen
Caroline Risbo
Taslima Syed Bastin
Clara Davodeau

Cello

Theodor Lyngstad
Mathias Beyer
Wiebke Vestergaard
Samira Dayyani
Julia Sompolinska-Hetman
Helena Iglesias
Lucie Geuraud
Amalie Thing Helset

Bass

Olle Davidson
Stephen Buckley
Morten Mandel
Piotr Hetman
Aleksander Górny

Flute

Viveca Löfgren
Marie-Sophie Perez

Oboe

Andreas Fosdal
Christian Andreas Skovlund
Birgitte Lindum

Clarinet

August Finkas
Wei Pan

Bassoon

Aleksandr Veryukhnov
Sofia Obando
Signe Haugland

Horn

Jakob Keiding
Niels Aamand Güntelberg
Stephen Craigen
Simon Didrik Nordstrand Berg

Trumpet

Joris de Rijbel
Luke Dempsey
Maren Grønningsæter

Trombone

Christian Schmiedescamp
Brian Ralph Santero von der Embse
William Ronneburg

Tuba

Tonni Hellebek

Timpani

Harry Teahan

Percussion

Rico Sindberg
Benjamin Fox

Recorded at the Royal Danish Academy of Music's Concert Hall, 27–28 February 2025

Recording producer: Daniel Davidsen

Engineering, mixing and mastering: Daniel Davidsen

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Dacapo Records, Denmark's national record label, was founded in 1989 with the purpose of releasing the best of Danish music past and present. The majority of our recordings are world premieres, and we are dedicated to producing music of the highest international standards.