

# DOUBLE TRIPLE KOPPEL

CONCERTOS  
BY ANDERS KOPPEL

MICHALA PETRI, BENJAMIN KOPPEL  
TINE REHLING, EUGENE HYE-KNUDSEN

ODENSE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, HENRIK VAGN CHRISTENSEN

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## CONCERTOS BY ANDERS KOPPEL

MICHALA PETRI, RECORDER

BENJAMIN KOPPEL, SAXOPHONES

TINE REHLING, HARP

EUGENE HYE-KNUDSEN, CELLO

ODENSE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

HENRIK VAGN CHRISTENSEN, CONDUCTOR

### Concerto for recorder, saxophone and orchestra (2010) .....

- |   |                             |       |
|---|-----------------------------|-------|
| 1 | I. Allegro moderato .....   | 39:07 |
| 2 | II. Larghetto .....         | 14:09 |
| 3 | III. Allegro moderato ..... | 12:43 |
|   |                             | 12:15 |

### Triple Concerto for mezzo saxophone, cello, harp and orchestra (2009) .....

- |   |                    |       |
|---|--------------------|-------|
| 4 | I. Allegro .....   | 38:08 |
| 5 | II. Moderato ..... | 14:18 |
|   |                    | 23:50 |

Total: 67:25

## DOUBLE TRIPLE KOPPEL by Esben Tange

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**Anders Koppel** (b. 1947) is to a rare degree a composer of his time. With one foot firmly planted in the classical European musical tradition and the other in world music, rock and jazz, Anders Koppel's career as a composer can be seen as one long continuous mission to unite these cultures in a contemporary musical idiom. This has resulted in a long succession of original and wide-ranging works, all bearing the mark of his special ability to communicate emotions and energy, powerfully and straightforwardly, between musicians and audience.

As a son of the composer and pianist Herman D. Koppel (1908-98) Anders Koppel grew up in a musical milieu; in his childhood and early youth he played piano and clarinet and at an early stage became thoroughly familiar with score-reading and instrumentation. At the same time Anders Koppel played an active part in the musical experiments that were part of the youth revolution of the 1960s and 1970s. In the years 1967-74, as an organist and lyricist, he was one of the mainstays of the rock group Savage Rose, which was among the most prominent, innovative bands on the Danish rock scene. After Anders Koppel left Savage Rose in 1974 he has increasingly immersed himself in the creation of contemporary composition music.

Alongside his work as a composer Anders Koppel has been an active musician in among other contexts the group Bazaar, which for about 35 years has cultivated a unique idiom combining improvisation, Balkan music and Anders Koppel's own compositions. Since 1996 he has also played with his son, the saxophonist Benjamin Koppel, in among other ensembles Koppel & Son as well as having formed a duo with the American pianist and composer Kenny Werner. His experiences as a performing artist are constantly reminding Anders Koppel of the importance of making the music relevant to the public, and this has resulted in distinctive music that is outward-looking and captivating. Rather than cultivating a particular compositional technique, Anders Koppel's music often has an undogmatically flowing character based on a classical view of tonality and on the natural expression of the individual instrument. In addition, Anders Koppel has composed music for around 200 films, plays and ballets. This has helped to hone his musical vocabulary, which besides the classical forms also involves a familiarity with and love of Latin American styles like tango, samba and Cuban music.



Anders Koppel

These influences can already be heard in his debut work for a classical ensemble: a piano quintet from 1982, which includes a tango. His true breakthrough as a composer of concert music followed in 1990 with *Toccata for Vibraphone and Marimba*, which is virtuosic, technically challenging music alternating with dreamlike passages of enchanting beauty. Here Anders Koppel has found a style of his own that gives the musicians the opportunity to create a performance of the highest standard that also appeals directly to the audience. Anders Koppel has later sublimated these qualities in a long series of concertos for soloist and orchestra where the direct identification with the soloist is often given an extra imaginative dimension, since he has been able to associate both intimate human feelings and supernatural power and passion with the central instrumentalist.

Among the concertos, those for marimba and orchestra – four in all (Dacapo 6.220595) – play a special role. With *Concerto no. 1 for Marimba and Orchestra* (1995) Anders Koppel already inscribed himself in the canon of marimba literature when, with its virtuosic interplay between the mercurial marimba and an impressive-sounding classical symphony orchestra, he created a concerto which is today indispensable for young soloistically talented percussionists, and which has been performed more than 300 times. And in *Concerto no. 4 for Marimba and Orchestra* (2005), written to mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of Mozart with the subtitle "In memory of things transient", Mozart's *Rondo alla Turca*, among other things, has been woven into the virtuosic marimba part. This Turkish-inspired piece by Mozart is particularly well chosen, since it testifies to Anders Koppel's strong belief that music – and our culture as such – is fertilized by the encounter between different traditions.

Anders Koppel's ability to penetrate to the inner nature of the individual instrument and find new modes of expression that break down habitual notions has led to a number of concertos for instruments that are rarely allowed to perform as soloists. This is the case for example in *Variations for Bass Trombone and Orchestra* (1997), *Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra* (2003), the accordion work *Concerto Piccolo* (2009) and most recently in *Concerto for Aluphone and Orchestra* (2013), where Anders Koppel has been the first composer to explore some of the rich sonorities to be found in the interaction of the bell-like aluphone and the symphony orchestra. The latest offshoot from the stem of solo concertos are a flute concerto, *Andorinha* (The Swallow), the *Concerto for Violin, Saxophone and Orchestra* given its first performance by the

Canadian violinist Karen Gomyo and Koppel's son Benjamin at Musikkens Hus in Aalborg in the autumn of 2014, and a bassoon concerto, commissioned on the occasion of Carl Nielsen's 150th anniversary in 2015.

### Saxophone concertos

The saxophone is the solo instrument for which Anders Koppel has most frequently composed concertos. Because of its unusually wide timbral and dynamic range the saxophone is ideal as a vehicle for Anders Koppel's expansive musical language. The saxophone's sound can be modulated from the peak of refinement and transparency to the directly aggressive and raw. Both extremes are represented in Anders Koppel's musical aesthetics. And just as the saxophone has a special ability to move freely between the classical and the rhythmic traditions, Anders Koppel is able to find new musical paths in the encounter between the traditional genres.

Another important explanation of the saxophone's prominent place in the series of works is the close artistic collaboration the composer has with his son Benjamin Koppel, who is one of the most wide-ranging saxophonists of his time, and who has an unusual ability to switch between virtuosic passages in tightly composed progressions and original fantasizing improvisations. These very qualities are much in evidence in among other works the *Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra* (1992), *Concert no. 2 for Saxophone and Orchestra* (2003) (both concertos have been recorded on Dacapo 8.226036), *Concert for Saxophone, Piano and Orchestra* (2006) (Dacapo 8.226055), *Triple Concerto for Mezzo Saxophone, Cello, Harp and Orchestra* (2009) and *Concerto for Recorder, Saxophone and Orchestra* (2010).

In the first saxophone concerto Anders Koppel already made rich use of the greater palette of sounds in the symphony orchestra. Besides powerful, inciting rhythmic sections influenced by both rock music and Bach-inspired fugato, the concerto is coloured by magical night moods where the celesta and the low-toned alto flute combine with delicate string sounds. All these concertos include passages where the saxophone is invited to improvise. In this way Anders Koppel builds bridges to the practice in the past when true improvised passages were an integral part of the concerto form.

## **Concerto for Recorder, Saxophone and Orchestra**

In the double concerto for recorder and saxophone, dedicated to and performed by Michala Petri and Benjamin Koppel, Anders Koppel has created an intense encounter between two instruments which are rarely heard in close contact, but which turn out to supplement each other splendidly. With its slender, woody tone quality the recorder, represented by its sopranino, soprano, alto, tenor and bass forms, creates a fine contrast with the broader-sounding alto saxophone, which offers itself with its warm brassy embrace. And thanks to the fleet-footed nature of both instruments they are able, despite their acoustic differences, to respond on an equal footing to the approaches and challenges each poses to the other along the way in the concerto.

The rhythmic energy of the first movement is striking. A syncopated motif in the strings, in conjunction with powerful contributions from the orchestra's full-bodied brass group, creates an accumulation of energy that makes the classical symphony orchestra leap out as an effervescently swinging big band. The rhythmic displacements that are repeated again and again have the character of labour pains with the result that the two solo instruments are plunged head over heels into an intensely musical ride where the sharply contoured sopranino in particular functions as a rhythmic motor and evokes memories of the concerto grosso of the Baroque – but realized here in a modern rhythmic world.

Along the way in the interpolated cadenzas a kind of 'time out' effect is created where the forward-thrusting logic of the movement is suspended in favour of a more freely improvised dialogue which gives Michala Petri and Benjamin Koppel the opportunity to add an extra dose of fantasy to the concerto.

In the slow second movement, too, there are links with the Baroque, since the movement takes the form of a passacaglia, where the same theme is repeated again and again in the various groups of the orchestra. The inexorable nature of the passacaglia gives the concerto a fateful tone of seriousness which forms an atmospheric background for the continued teamwork of the two soloists, offering among other things a so-called 'chase' – a mutual hunt that is otherwise usually heard in jazz. Towards the end of the movement, however, it is as if the musical characters are again set free, as the music moves into an innocent fairytale world where the saxophone, the dark bass recorder and the brightly sparkling glockenspiel let repeated figures fall from the sky like leaves from the trees on a still, cold autumn day.

In the last movement the energy level is again extremely high. With notes fired off with the power of an artillery salvo, the soprano recorder sets the scene for yet another intensely musical ride, and with an exotically spiced harmony the expression becomes denser. After a quieter intervening section where the passacaglia theme of the second movement helps to create a mood of smouldering mysticism, great orchestral energy is again mobilized towards the ending, where among other things dramatically descending brass motifs lead to desperate flights, not least for the high-flying sopranino. All the more reconciliatory is the subdued ending, where the music so to speak falls into line with repetitions of the same musical elements, until a mild trill of the timpani pours its last calming oil over the earlier so troubled waters.

## **Triple Concerto for Mezzo Saxophone, Cello, Harp and Orchestra**

In the triple concerto for the quite unique configuration saxophone, cello and harp the mezzo saxophone is presented for the first time in the context of a large orchestra – after Anders Koppel, in *Quintet for Mezzo Saxophone and String Quartet* (2008) (Dacapo 6.220566) gave the instrument its debut in a classical context. With its lyrical qualities and its velvety timbre, the mezzo saxophone, developed by the Danish instrument maker Peter Jessen, matches the cello and harp extremely well, since both instruments belong to a milder zone. After a short intro for full orchestra the intimate first subject is presented, striking a naivistically inward note characteristic of the whole concerto with repetitions of the same motif in the harp and feline, descending glissandi in the cello. Although the three soloist are now and then played off against one another like antagonists in a drama, the large first movement is dominated by harmonious music that rests within itself, where it is the unfolding of particular details of the sonority that are in focus. For example a number of silvery chords in the celesta and pizzicato string voices evoke memories towards the end of the nuances of sonority in which the music of Richard Strauss is rich.

The concentration on the inherent energies of the music is intensified and deepened in the second movement, which is typified by great simplicity, and in which an ascending theme in the cello rises towards the heavens and signals an ethereal dimension that comes further to expression when a fervently fantasizing air in the saxophone weaves its way over an ostinato in the second violins, as well as later in the cello and harp. A lengthier minimalistic section subsequently

opens the way for a dreamlike state where the normal forward-striving sense of time is suspended in favour of a meditation over simple musical figures that are repeated again and again.

The classical symphony orchestra is used here first and foremost to colour the individual sections, and the triple concerto thus emerges as the opposite pole to the highly outward-looking, dynamically progressing double concerto for recorder and alto saxophone. The triple concerto is instead characterized by a metamorphosis technique where the same themes return, but in gradually changing forms – as in a kaleidoscope which constantly reveals new dimensions of a world that seems familiar.

Despite the recurrence of the saxophone as solo instrument, the two concerts, both written within a year, are essentially different; and for this very reason they complement each other. While the *Triple Concerto*, by virtue of its constant immersion in the same material, is typified by insight and the ongoing expression of new nuances, the Double Concerto is characterized by alternating confrontation and dialogue with a consistent lust for adventure as its musical driving force.

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## THE PERFORMERS

**Michala Petri** (recorder) started her formal education at age 11 at Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hannover, Germany, with Professor Ferdinand Conrad. Since then she has performed at major festivals and in concert halls around the world. She has worked with among others Gidon Kremer, Joshua Bell, James Galway, Keith Jarrett, Christopher Hogwood, and Claudio Abbado. Since 1992 Michala Petri has been in a duo with Danish guitarist and lute player Lars Hannibal, with whom she also performs worldwide. In 2013 she also formed a duo with harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani. Michala Petri's repertoire spans from Early Baroque to Contemporary music, and her vivid interest in expanding the expressive possibilities of her instrument has made her an inspiration for many of today's composers. Michael Petri's many recordings have received much recognition, among others four Grammy nominations and three ECHO KLASSIK AWARDS. Michala Petri received the prestigious Léonie Sonning Music Prize in 2000, and was awarded the 1<sup>st</sup> rank of Knight of the Dannebrog in 2011. In September 2012 Michala Petri was appointed Honorary Professor at the Royal Danish Academy of Music.

Saxophonist, composer and entrepreneur **Benjamin Koppel** has released more than 40 solo albums, composed more than 200 pieces of music for albums, film and theatre, and has participated on more than 100 album productions. He has been a guest lecturer at universities in USA and China, Head of Music at the Danish jazz club Jazzhus Montmartre and is a frequent guest on Danish television. In 2010 he published his first book about experiencing music. Koppel tours all parts of the world and performs with international Jazz stars, Danish pop musicians and great symphony orchestras. He annually gives concerts at the famous jazz club Blue Note in New York, and he has received numerous honours and awards. In 2011 he was appointed Knight of Culture (Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres) by the French Minister of Culture.

**Tine Rehling** (harp) graduated in 1989 from the Royal Danish Academy of Music. From 1989-1991 she took further studies with distinguished Professor Susann McDonald at Indiana University, USA. From 1998 to 2001 Tine Rehling held the position as Principal Harpist at the Aalborg Symphony Orchestra. She has since focused on her solo and chamber music career, performing

as a soloist with most Danish symphony orchestras and touring throughout Europe, Turkey, USA, Brazil, China and Australia. She is continuously working to expand the repertoire for harp, collaborating with a number of Danish composers. In 2006 she released a CD of Per Nørgård's music for harp, which was named 'CD of the month', by the British online magazine, Musicweb International, acclaimed as "*an excellent CD, superbly played*". Tine Rehling has recorded a number of CDs as a soloist and chamber musician.

**Eugene Hye-Knudsen** (cello) trained at the Royal Danish Academy of Music with Professor Erling Bløndal Bengtsson and had his debut from the soloist class in 1996. In 1998 he won the position as *Kongelig Kapelmusikus* at The Royal Danish Theatre and in 2002 he took the position as Principal Cellist in Aarhus Symphony Orchestra. He was soloist with Aarhus Symphony Orchestra in Shostakovich's 1<sup>st</sup> cello concert (2004), Bruch's *Kol Nidrei* (2006), Elgar's celloconcert, the premiere in 2010 of Anders Koppel's Triple Concerto for mezzosoprano saxophone, cello and harp, John Williams' film score to *Seven Years in Tibet*, also in 2010, and most recently in Strauss' *Don Quixote*, in 2014. In 1995 Eugene Hye-Knudsen was awarded Jacob Gade's Scholarship and in 1997 the Veuve Clicquot Prize.

**Odense Symphony Orchestra** – one of Denmark's five regional orchestras – was established in 1946 with roots going back to about 1800. From being a theatre orchestra also playing symphonic music the orchestra today is a continuously developing and expanding modern symphony orchestra with a high level of activity. Odense Symphony Orchestra consists of 73 permanent musicians who on a yearly basis give c. 100 concerts with a repertoire spanning from the Early Baroque to contemporary music. Odense Symphony Orchestra has toured in the USA, China, Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, the Baltic countries, Russia, Spain, France, Sweden and the former Soviet Union, twice. The orchestra's discography of about 60 CD's includes a varied repertoire reaching from classical masterpieces to contemporary music, among them several award-winning releases. A recording with music by the American composer Peter Lieberson received a US Grammy nomination in 2007.

**Henrik Vagn Christensen** is a versatile conductor with a repertoire spanning a wide range of arts and genres: symphonies, contemporary music, opera, operetta and musicals and ballet. He is considered the leading Danish ballet conductor of his generation and was associated with the Royal Danish Theatre in 1996–2012 and from 2013 with the New York City Ballet. Henrik Vagn Christensen also conducted at the Finnish National Ballet, the Royal Swedish Ballet, the Norwegian Opera, the State Theatre in Pretoria, The Kennedy Center in Washington, and the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg. His close cooperation with the Danish Radio orchestras has brought him many engagements from concerts and ballet to film and TV recordings – most recently the music for the TV series '1864'. The Danish regional orchestras have been the point of departure for his symphonic repertoire, and over the years Henrik Vagn Christensen has played innumerable concerts with all of these as well as making CD recordings and educational productions for children and the young – not least with Odense Symphony Orchestra which Henrik Vagn Christensen has conducted more than 60 times.

**Anders Koppel** er i sjælden grad en komponist af sin tid. Med det ene ben solidt plantet i den klassiske europæiske musiktradition og det andet ben i verdensmusikken og den rytmiske musik kan Anders Koppels virke som komponist ses som ét langt vedvarende arbejde med at forene disse kulturer i et nutidigt tonesprog. Det har resulteret i en lang række originale og vidtspændende værker, der alle er præget af en særlig evne til at kommunikere følelser og energi stærkt og ligetil mellem musikere og publikum.

Som søn af komponisten og pianisten Herman D. Koppel (1908-98) voksede Anders Koppel op i et musikalsk miljø, og som barn og helt ung spillede han klaver og klarinet og fik tidligt et indgående kendskab til partiturlæsning og instrumentering. Samtidig tog Anders Koppel aktivt del i de musikalske eksperimenter, som var en del af 1960'ernes og 70'ernes ungdomsoprør. I årene 1967-74 var han som organist og tekstforfatter et af de bærende medlemmer i rockgruppen Savage Rose, der var blandt de mest fremtrædende og nyskabende på den danske rock-scene. Efter at Anders Koppel i 1974 trådte ud af Savage Rose har han i stigende grad fordybet sig i skabelsen af ny kompositionsmusik.

Sideløbende med arbejdet som komponist har Anders Koppel været aktiv musiker i blandt andet gruppen Bazaar, hvor han i mere end 35 år dyrkede et unikt udtryk præget af improvisation, balkanmusik og Anders Koppels egne kompositioner. Siden 1996 har han også spillet sammen med sønnen, saxofonisten Benjamin Koppel i bl.a. orkestret Koppel & Søn, samt indgået i et duo-samarbejde med den amerikanske pianist og komponist Kenny Werner. Erfaringerne som scenekunstner minder til stadighed Anders Koppel om vigtigheden af at gøre musikken vedkomende for publikum, og det har resulteret i en egen musik, der i særlig grad er udadvendt og medrivende. Frem for at dyrke en særlig kompositorisk teknik har Anders Koppels musik ofte en udogmatisk strømmende karakter baseret på en klassisk tonalitetsopfattelse og på det enkelte instruments naturlige udtryksmåde. Dertil kommer, at Anders Koppel har komponeret musik til omkring 200 film, teaterforestillinger og balletter, hvilket har været med til at skærpe hans musikalske vokabularium, der foruden de klassiske former også indebærer et nært kendskab til og kærlighed til latinamerikanske stilarter som tango, samba og cubansk musik.

Det høres allerede i debutværket for klassisk besætning: en klaverkvintet fra 1982, hvori der indgår en tango. Det egentlige gennembrud som komponist af koncertmusik fulgte i 1990 med *Toccata for Vibrafon og Marimba*, der er virtuos og teknisk udfordrende musik, som veksler med drømmende passager af fortynnende skønhed. Her har Anders Koppel fundet en egen stil, der både giver de udøvende musikere mulighed for at skabe performance på højeste niveau, og som appellerer direkte til publikum. Disse kvaliteter har Anders Koppel siden sublimeret i godt 30 koncerter for solist og orkester, hvor den umiddelbare identifikation med solisten ofte tilføjes en fantastisk dimension, og hvor der er knyttet både intime menneskelige følelser og overnaturlig kraft og lidenskab til den centrale instrumentalist.

Blandt koncerterne spiller de i alt 4 koncerter for marimba og orkester (Dacapo 6.220595) en særlig rolle. Allerede med *Koncert nr. 1 for Marimba og Orkester* (1995) skrev Anders Koppel sig ind i marimba-litteraturens kanon, da han i kraft af en virtuos leg mellem den letbevægelige marimba og et imposant klingende klassisk symfoniorkester har skabt en koncert, der i dag er uomgængelig for unge solistisk begavede slagtøjsspillere, og som er blevet opført mere end 300 gange. Og i *Koncert nr. 4 for marimba og orkester* (2005), der er skrevet i anledning af 250 året for Mozarts fødsel og har undertitlen "Til det forgængeliges ihukommelse", er blandt andet Mozarts *Rondo alla Turca* flettet ind i den virtuose marimbastemme. Netop dette tyrkisk inspirerede stykke af Mozart er særligt velvalgt, da det vidner om Anders Koppels stærke tro på, at musik – og vores kultur som sådan – befrugtes af mødet mellem forskellige traditioner.

Anders Koppels sans for at fordybe sig i det enkelte instruments natur og finde nye udtryksmåder, som bryder vante forestillinger, har ført til en række koncerter for instrumenter, som sjældent får lov til at opræde solistik. Det er blandt andet tilfældet i *Variationer for basbasun og orkester* (1997), *Koncert for tuba and orkester* (2003), akkordeonkoncerteren *Concerto Piccolo* (2009) og senest i *Koncert for Alufon og Orkester* (1913), hvor Anders Koppel som den første komponist udfolder nogle af de rige klanglige muligheder, der ligger i samspillet mellem den klokkelignende Alufon og symfoniorkestret. Seneste skud på stammen af solokoncerter er en fløjtekonzert *Andorinha* (Svalen), *Koncert for Violin, Saxofon og Orkester*, der uropførtes af den canadiske violinist Karen Gomyo og sønnen Benjamin i Musikkens Hus i Aalborg i efteråret 2014, samt en fagotkonzert bestilt i anledningen af Carl Nielsens 150 år i 2015.

## Saxofonkoncerter

Saxofonen er det soloinstrument, Anders Koppel oftest har komponeret koncerter for. I kraft af sin usædvanlig store klanglige og dynamiske spændvidde er saxofonen ideel til at formidle Anders Koppels ekspansive musikalske sprog. Saxofonens klang kan moduleres fra det mest forfinede og gennemsigtige til det ligefrem aggressive og rå. Begge yderpunkter er repræsenteret i Anders Koppels musikalske æstetik. Og ligesom saxofonen ejer en særlig evne til at bevæge sig frit mellem den klassiske og rytmiske tradition, formår Anders Koppel at finde nye musikalske veje i mødet mellem de traditionelle gener.

En anden væsentlig forklaring på saxofonens fremtrædende plads i værkraekken er det tætte kunstneriske samarbejde med sønnen Benjamin Koppel, der er en af tidens mest vidtpæn-dende saxofonister, og som har en usædvanlig evne til at veksle mellem virtuose passager i stramt komponerede forløb og originalt fabulerende improvisationer. Netop disse kvaliteter efterspørges i rigt mål i bl.a. *Koncert for saxofon og orkester* (1992), *Koncert nr. 2 for saxofon og orkester* (2003) (begge koncerter er indspillet på Dacapo 8.226036), *Koncert for saxofon, klaver og orkester* (2006) (Dacapo 8.226055), *Tripelkoncert for mezzosaxofon, cello, harpe og orkester* (2009) og *Koncert for blokfløjte, saxofon og orkester* (2010).

Allerede i den første saxofonkoncert gør Anders Koppel rig brug af symfoniorkestrets store klangpalet. Foruden stærkt inciterende rytmiske afsnit påvirket af både rock og Bach-inspireret fugato er koncerterne præget af magiske nattestemninger, hvor celeste og den dybt klingende alt-fløjte forenes med sarte strygeklange. I alle disse koncerter indgår der afsnit, hvor der – for saxofonens vedkommende – er lagt op til improvisationer. Derved bygger Anders Koppel bro til tidligere tiders praksis, hvor egentlige improviserede passager var en integreret del af koncertformen.

## Koncert for blokfløjte, saxofon og orkester (2010)

I dobbeltkoncerten for blokfløjte og saxofon, der er tilegnet og uropført af Michala Petri og Benjamin Koppel, har Anders Koppel skabt et forrygende møde mellem to instrumenter, der sjældent er i nærbane, men som viser sig at supplere hinanden glimrende. Blokfløjten, der er repræsenteret af både soprano, soprano, alt, tenor og basfløjte, skaber med sin slanke træagtige tonekvalitet et godt modspil til den bredere klingende altsaxofon, der byder sig til med sin varme messingfavn. Og i kraft af begge instrumenters rapfodede natur er de trods deres

klanglige forskelligheder i stand til at svare igen på en ligeværdig måde på de tilnærmelser og udfordringer, de hver især stikker ud til hinanden undervejs i koncerten.

Den rytmiske energi i første sats begyndelse er slående. Et synkoperet motiv i strygerne skaber sammen med kraftfulde indsatser fra orkestrets stort besatte messingblæsergruppe en ophobning af energi, der får det klassiske symfoniorkester til at springe ud som et frådende swingende bigband. De rytmiske forskydninger, der gentages igen og igen, har karakter af fødselsvej og resulterer i at de to soloinstrumenter kastes hovedkuls ind i et intenst musikalsk ridt, hvor ikke mindst den spidst klingende soprano fungerer som rytmisk motor og giver mindelser om barokkens concerto grosso – men her realiseret i en moderne rytmisk verden.

Undervejs i de indlagte kadencer indtraeder der en form for *time out*, hvor satsens fremad-skridende logik midlertidigt suspenderes til fordel for en mere fri improviseret dialog, og som giver Michala Petri og Benjamin Koppel anledning til at tilføre koncerten yderligere fantastik.

I den langsomme anden sats er der også forbindelse til barokken, da satsen er formet som en passacaglia, hvor det samme tema gentages igen og igen i orkestrets forskellige grupper. Passacagliaens uafvendelige natur tilfører koncerten en skæbnesvanger alvorstone, som skaber en stemningsmættet baggrund for de to solisters fortsatte parløb, der bl.a. byder på en såkaldt *chase* – en indbyrdes jagt, der ellers oftest opleves i jazzmusik. Mod slutningen af satsen er det dog, som om de musikalske karakterer efter sættes fri, da musikken bevæger sig ind i en uskyldens eventyrverden, hvor saxofonen, den mørke basfløjte og det lyt glimtende klokkespil lader enkle gentagne figurer falde fra himlen som blade fra træerne en stille kold efterårsdag.

I sidste sats er energineiveauet igen ekstremt højt. Med toner affyret med en kraft, som var det en geværsalve, sætter soprano-blokfløjten scenen for endnu et intenst musikalsk ridt, og med en eksotisk krydret harmonik fortættes udtrykket yderligere. Efter et roligere mellem afsnit, hvor anden sats' passacaglia-tema er med til at skabe en stemning af ulmende mystik, mobiliseres der igen store orkesterkrafter mod slutningen, hvor bl.a. dramatisk faldende messingblæser-motiver fører til desperate luftture for ikke mindst den højtflyvende soprano. Desto mere forsonende er den afdæmpede slutning, hvor musikken så at sige falder i hak med gentagelser af de samme musikalske elementer, inden en spagfærdig pauketrille gyder en sidste olie over det tidligere så oprørte hav.

## **Tripelkoncert for mezzosaxofon, cello, harpe og orkester (2009)**

I tripelkonerten for den helt unikke besætning saxofon, cello og harpe præsenteres mezzosaxofonen for første gang i en sammenhæng med stort orkester – efter at Anders Koppel i *Kvintet for mezzosaxofon og strygekvartet* (2008) (Dacapo 6.220566) gav instrumentet dets debut i en klassisk sammenhæng. Mezzosaxofonen, der er udviklet af den danske instrumentbygger Peter Jessen, matcher med sine lyriske kvaliteter og sin fløjlsagtige klang i særlig grad celloen og harpen, der begge er instrumenter tilhørende en mildere zone. Efter en kort intro for fuldt orkester præsenteres det intime hovedtema, der med gentagelser af det samme motiv i harpen og katteagtigt faldende glissandoer i celloen slåes en naivistisk indadvendt tone an, der er kendetegnende for hele koncerthen. Selv om de tre solister af og til spilles ud mod hinanden som antagonister i et drama, er den store førstesats domineret af harmonisk musik, der hviler i sig selv, og hvor det især er udfoldelsen af særlige klanglige detaljer, som er i fokus. Feks. giver en række søvglitrende akkorder i celeste og pizzikerede strygerstemmer frem mod slutningen mindelser om nogle af de klanglige finesse, Richard Strauss' musik er rig på.

Koncentrationen om musikkens iboende kræfter forstærkes og uddybes i anden sats, der er præget af stor enkelhed, og hvor et opadstigende tema i celloen rejser sig mod himlen og signalerer en sfærisk dimension, som udfoldes yderligere, da en underligt fabulerende arie i saxofonen folder sig ud over et ostinat i 2. violinerne samt senere i cello og harpe. Siden åbner et længere minimalistisk afsnit op for en drømmende tilstand, hvor den sædvanlige fremadskridende tidsformemmelse suspenderes til fordel for en meditation over enkle musikalske gestalter, der gentages igen og igen.

Det klassiske symfoniorkester bruges her først og fremmest til at farvelægge de enkelte afsnit, og dermed fremstår tripelkonerten som en modpol til den i høj grad uudadvendte og dynamisk fremadskridende dobbeltkoncert for blokfløjte og altsaxofon. Tripelkonerten er i stedet præget af metamorfose-teknik, hvor de samme temae vender tilbage, men i gradvis ændret form – som et kalejdoskop, der til stadighed afslører nye dimensioner af en verden, der synes velkendt.

De to koncerter, der er skrevet inden for et år, er, til trods for at saxofonen går igen som solo-instrument i begge koncerter, væsensforskellige. Og netop i kraft af dette kompletterer de to

koncerter hinanden. Hvor tripelkonerten i kraft af sin stadige fordybelse i det samme materiale er præget af indblík og en løbende udfoldelse af nye nuancer, er dobbeltkonerten præget af skiftevis konfrontation og dialog med en standende eventyrlyst som musikalsk drivkraft.

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## DE MEDVIRKENDE

**Michala Petri** (blokfløjte) blev allerede som 11-årig optaget på Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Theater i Hannover under professor Ferdinand Conrad. Siden har hun optrådt på et utal af festivaler og koncerter verden over. Hun har arbejdet sammen bl.a. Gidon Kremer, Joshua Bell, James Galway, Keith Jarrett, Christopher Hogwood og Claudio Abbado. Siden 1992 har Michala Petri spillet i duo med guitaristen og lutenisten Lars Hannibal, som hun også har optrådt med verden over. I 2013 dannede hun ligeledes en duo med cembalisten Mahan Esfahani. Michala Petris repertoire spænder fra den tidlige barok til den helt ny musik, og hendes levende interesse for at udvide sit instruments udtryksfulde muligheder har gjort hende til en inspiration for mange nutidige komponister. Michala Petris mange indspilninger har modtaget en del opmærksomhed, bl.a. fire Grammy-nomineringer og tre ECHO KLASSIK AWARDS. Michala Petri har selv modtaget flere priser, bl.a. Léonie Sonnings Musikpris i 2000, og i 2011 blev hun Ridder af 1. grad af Dannebrog. I 2012 blev Michala Petri udnævnt som æresprofessor ved Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium.

Saxofonist, komponist og iværksætter **Benjamin Koppel** har udgivet over 40 cd'er som solist, komponeret flere end 200 musikstykker til cd-udgivelser, film og teater og medvirket på flere end 100 cd-produktioner. Han har været gæsteforelæser ved universiteter i USA og Kina, musikchef på Jazzhus Montmartre og siden 2009 dommer i "Smagsdommerne" på DR. I 2010 debuterede han på Gyldendal som forfatter til bogen "Ud af Musikken". Koppel turnerer i hele verden og optræder med internationale jazzstjerner, danske popnavne og symfoniorkestre. Han optræder årligt på jazzklubben Blue Note i New York og har modtaget en lang række priser og hædersbevisninger, herunder Django d'Or Prisen og Ben Webster Foundations Initiativpris. I 2011 modtog han den franske ridderorden L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres for sin indsats for udviklingen af fransk og international kultur.

**Tine Rehling** (harp) er uddannet fra Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium i 1989 og studerede videre hos professor Susann McDonald ved Indiana University, USA, indtil 1991. Tine Rehling var 1. harpe i Aalborg Symfoniorkester fra 1998-2001. Hun har siden fokuseret på en karriere som solo- og kammermusiker og har optrådt som solist med de fleste danske symfo-

orkestre samt turneret Europa, Tyrkiet, USA, Brasilien, Kina og Australien. Tine Rehling arbejder hele tiden på at udvide repertoaret for harpe i samarbejde med en række danske komponister. I 2006 udgav hun en cd med Per Nørgårds musik for harpe, som blev udnævnt 'CD of the month' af det britiske online-magasin, Musicweb International: "*an excellent CD, superbly played*". Tine Rehling har indspillet en række af cd'er som både solist og kammermusiker.

**Eugene Hye-Knudsen** (cello) studerede ved Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium hos professor Erling Blöndal Bengtsson og havde sin debut samme sted fra i 1996. I 1998 vandt han en stilling som Kongelig Kapelmusikus på Det Kgl. Teater, og i 2002 fik han stillingen som 1. solo-cellist i Aarhus Symfoniorkester. Han har været solist med Aarhus Symfoniorkester i Sjostakovitsj 1. cellokoncert i 2004, Bruchs *Kol Nidrei* i 2006, Elgars cellokoncert i 2008, uropførelsen i 2010 af Anders Koppels Tripelkoncert for mezzosaxofon, cello og harpe, John Williams' filmmusik til *Seven Years in Tibet*, også i 2010, og senest Strauss' *Don Quixote* i 2014. Eugene Hye-Knudsen blev i 1995 tildelt Jacob Gades Legat og i 1997 Veuve Clicquot Prisen.

**Odense Symfoniorkester** blev grundlagt i 1946 med rødder helt tilbage til omkring 1800. Fra at være et teaterorkester, som også spillede symfonisk musik, fremstår orkestret i dag som et moderne symfoniorkester med et højt aktivitetsniveau og under stadig udvikling. Odense Symfoniorkester har 73 fastansatte musikere, som årligt giver ca. 100 koncerter med et repertoire, der strækker sig fra barokken til vor egen tids musik. Orkestrets turnévirksomhed inkluderer store koncertrejsler til USA, Kina, Tyskland, Grækenland, Østrig, Holland, Belgien, Frankrig, Sverige, hele fem turnéer i Spanien og to i det tidligere Sovjetunionen. Diskografien er omfattende – mere end 60 udgivelser er det blevet til og flere er undervejs – og tæller adskillige prisvindende udgivelser. I 2007 opnåede en cd med musik af den amerikanske komponist Peter Lieberson en amerikansk Grammy nominering.

**Henrik Vagn Christensen** er en alsidig dirigent med et repertoire, der spænder over en bred kam af kunstarter og genrer: symfonier, ny musik, opera, operette og musicals og ballet. Han anses som sin generations førende danske balletdirigent og har været tilknyttet Det Kgl. Teater fra 1996-2012 og fra 2013 New York City Ballet. Henrik Vagn Christensen har også dirigeret på

Den Finske Nationalballet, Den Kgl. Svenske Ballet, Den Norske Opera, State Theatre i Pretoria, Teatro Real i Madrid, The Kennedy Center i Washington samt Mariinskij Teateret i Skt. Petersborg. Et nært samarbejde med DRs orkester har budt på mange opgaver fra koncerter over ballet til film- og tv-indspilninger, senest musikken til tv-serien '1864'. De danske landsdelsorkestre har været udgangspunktet for hans symfoniske repertoire, og Henrik Vagn Christensen har gennem årene spillet utallige koncerter med dem alle samt lavet cd-indspilninger og formidlingsproduktioner for børn og unge, ikke mindst med Odense Symfoniorkester, som Henrik Vagn Christensen har stået i spidsen for mere end 60 gange.

**DDD**

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