



Songs from Evening Land

Helene Gjerris sings Per Nørgård

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Helene Gjerris, mezzo-soprano

Ulla Miilmann, flute

Johannes Søe Hansen, violin

Lotte Wallevik, viola

Toke Møldrup, cello

Jesper Lützhøft, guitar

Tine Rehling, harp

Anne Marie Abildskov, piano

Gert Sørensen, percussion

Casper Schreiber, conductor *

TWO RECITATIVES, OP. 16 (1955-56)

for alto with obbligato solo cello 8:21

[1] I Jag lyssnar till vinden 3:30

[2] II Gammal genius 4:51

ENTWICKLUNGEN (1986)

Two songs for alto, flute, guitar, percussion and cello 8:42

[3] I Kindheit 4:56

[4] II Die Genesende 3:46

PLUTONIAN ODE (1980-84)

Recitative and aria for soprano and cello 11:32

[5] Recitation (introduction) 1:10

[6] I Recitation 4:37

[7] II Aria 5:45

TROIS CHANSONS DE “L’AMOUR LA POÉSIE” (1967)

arrangées pour voix d’alto et flûte en sol 5:56

[8] I Le sommeil 1:26

[9] II Les corbeaux 2:04

[10] III La terre 2:26

THREE LOVE SONGS (1963-65; rev. 2010) *

for mezzo-soprano, flute, percussion, harp, piano, violin, viola and cello 8:12

[11] I L’étoile a pleuré rose 0:56

[12] II Wie soll ich meine Seele halten 3:50

[13] III Opfer (fragment) 3:26

DAY AND NIGHT (1982)

Two short songs for low voice and piano with cello (ad lib.) 3:39

[14] I A Kill 2:00

[15] II Silver-sweet Sound 1:39

[16] SOLEN SÅ JEG (I saw the Sun) (1953; rev. 2010) *

for mezzo-soprano, flute, violin, viola and cello 1:36

SÅNGER FRÅN “AFTONLAND” (Songs from “Evening Land”), OP. 17 (1956) *

for alto, flute, violin, viola, cello and harp 29:00

Part I

[17] No. 1, Allt är så underligt fjärran i dag 6:19

[18] No. 2, Du människa som står vid stranden av mig 4:08

[19] No. 3, Det är om aftonen man bryter upp 3:31

Part II

[20] No. 1, Preludio 3:24

[21] No. 2, Nu är det sommersorgon 2:41

[22] No. 3, Tacka vill jag 6:01

Part III

[23] Det är om aftonen man bryter upp 2:56

[24] SCHLAFEN GEHEN, SCHMERZ UND NOT (2012)

Arrangement of “Abendlied” from “Two Wölflí Lieder for choir” (1980)

for vocals and percussion 2:02

Total 79:02

Exactly 25 years ago I had my first intense encounter with Per Nørgård's music. I had just been accepted on trial by the vocal ensemble Ars Nova, and one of the first jobs on the programme was Nørgård's *Wie ein Kind*. My qualifications for rehearsing music with this degree of difficulty were close to zero, but I struggled determinedly to learn my part, and my amazement, joy and excitement were great when I was at last able to hear all the parts united in a totality. At the time, of course, I was not aware that the experience was to be of great importance to the direction my artistic career was to take later.

Subsequently I have had many opportunities to work with Per Nørgård's music in solo contexts – with among other things the opera *Nuit des hommes* and the cantata *The Will-o'-the-Wisps Go to Town*. The unmistakable Nørgård vocal lines have continued to appeal to my urge to explore the possibilities of my voice and to make use of expressive devices that are otherwise rarely justified in the classically trained use of the voice.

In the winter of 2008 I drove to Langeland and visited Per Nørgård. My idea was to do a CD with a collection of vocal works from the whole of Per's production, as an opportunity to sum up all the experience I had gained from his music over the years. During the next few months we exchanged ideas for the repertoire on the CD and arrived at the result that is now presented here.

It has proved a strange and wonderful journey through time in Per Nørgård's vocal music, where rich, sophisticated chamber music instrumentation illuminates the poems in the different languages, and where we meet a composer who, ever since the earliest works, has tried out recitational and declamatory effects in the use of the singing voice; a method that culminates in the works from the 1980s, in which he makes explicit use of these elements.

It has been a constant challenge to work with the material, but there is no doubt that Per Nørgård's music is to a very special degree reflected and echoed in me, and that there was a deeper meaning in my experience of the encounter with his music 25 years ago.

Helene Gjerris, July 2012

PER NØRGÅRD (born 1932) is Denmark's great, original composer from the time after World War II. With his lively emotional imagination and his ingenious musical structures he has shifted boundaries and opened up new musical landscapes and modes of awareness that challenge the musicality of the performers and listeners.

Per Nørgård was born in Copenhagen, where his parents had a shop selling wedding dresses and other ladies' wear. He has lived most of his life in Denmark, but he has also travelled widely in both East and West. In his student years Per Nørgård was a pupil of Vagn Holmboe; at the same time he was a great admirer of the music of Jean Sibelius.

In those years Per Nørgård worked with the idea of "the universe of the Nordic mind", understood as a feeling that nature and the light in the northern regions helped to unite our cultures. Later, like other composers of his generation, he explored the serial music of central Europe.

This was the background for Per Nørgård's invention in 1959 of his unique 'infinity series' on the basis of the fractal theories of the mathematician Benoît Mandelbrot. Skewed rhythms, in many cases based on the proportions of the Golden Section and interference phenomena, also became important elements in his music.

Around 1980 Per Nørgård began to extend his compositional palette once more, looking for means of expressing the darker sides of the human mind. To this end he created a number of works inspired by the schizophrenic Swiss artist Adolf Wölfl. These works included a good deal of highly expressive vocal music as well as the Fourth Symphony, which alternates between idyll and disaster, order and chaos.

The vocal works on this CD were composed in the 1950s, the 1960s and the 1980s. For Per Nørgård the texts were to a very great extent the crucial inspiration for his vocal compositions. They are powerful, and come from a variety of countries and language areas. The accompaniment to the songs is highly varied, as is the choice of instruments and the sophisticated way they are used to bring out the sonorities and structure of the music.

ABOUT THE WORKS

In 1953, long before Jess Ørnsbo made his debut as a poet and Per Nørgård had his debut concert, Per Nørgård composed music to Ørnsbo's poem *Solen så jeg* (I saw the Sun). This short, intense song is about maturing enough to love. The instrumentation, with flute, violin, viola and cello, was done in 2010 in connection with the recording of this CD.

Over the next few years Per Nørgård composed a number of 'Evening Land works' to texts by the Swedish poet Pär Lagerkvist, specifically the choral work *Aftonland* (Evening Land) from 1954, *Two Recitatives* and *Songs from "Evening Land"*. The last of these is five songs about grief, longing and departure. Per Nørgård's idea of 'the universe of the Nordic mind' found its form during the composition of these Lagerkvist songs, and the inspiration from his great exemplar Jean Sibelius is unmistakable in the orchestral-sounding instrumentation of the almost folk-like song lines.

Per Nørgård's music from the 1960s is represented by two works. In *Three Love Songs* a very short poem by Arthur Rimbaud is combined with two poems by Rainer Maria Rilke. *Three Love Songs* was originally composed for soloist and orchestra. For this CD recording Per Nørgård has adapted the instrumentation of the songs to the ensemble of musicians who play in the other works on the CD. The work *Trois chansons de "L'Amour la poésie"* was composed to texts by the French Surrealist poet Paul Éluard. They revolve around the relationships between sleep, ravens and the orange-blue earth and with the beloved. The musical idiom is subdued: the erotic intensity is concentrated around the closely interwoven lines of the singer and the solo flute.

There is a great expressive leap from the early works to the vocal work *Plutonian Ode*, which Per Nørgård composed to fragments of the American Allen Ginsberg's poem from 1978 with the same title. Here the poet and composer lash out on the issue of the terrible taboo of the time – total nuclear annihilation – with great verbal intensity. Under the inspiration of some stays on Bali, Per Nørgård saw his rendering of this poem as a kind of exorcism. Per Nørgård described this wild, sprawling aria as "... a rhythmically intense threnody to plutonium, viewed as the basic emptiness of total destruction – opposed to the indefatigable will of the human spirit to create connections and meaning. The

constant ambivalences of the rhythm are united here with the transformations of words in gradual shifts of meaning (for example "at last" – "Atlas" – "alas")."

Day and Night from 1982 has texts by Ted Hughes and William Shakespeare. Ted Hughes' poem, "A Kill", is a description of the pangs of coming into the world, of being born. Shakespeare's balmy declaration of love, on the other hand, also calls night and darkness to mind and is a brief extract from *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Scene III.

Entwicklungen (Developments) was composed to two poems by Rainer Maria Rilke. The first poem, *Kindheit* (Childhood), revolves around the remote, lost, long afternoons of childhood. The second poem, *Die Genesende* (The convalescent), describes how life plays with the invalid until healing arrives as a soft, sensitive caress.

The last item on the CD, *Schlafen gehen, Schmerz und Not* is a free version of Nørgård's choral piece *Abendlied* (from *Two Wölflied* from 1980). In this 2012-style 're-mix' Helene Gjerris herself recorded all four choral parts, while Gert Sørensen added gamelan instruments.

Eva Hvidt, cand. mag., is a music journalist and external member of the project staff of the Danish Centre for Music Publication (DCM) at the Royal Danish Library.

HELENE GJERRIS

You can master it all – Carmen, Baroque music and the latest avant-garde. At least if you are HELENE GJERRIS (b. 1968). Her all-embracing talent has captivated audiences and composers alike since the middle of the 1990s. Even before she made her official debut in 1997 she had emerged as an unusual figure in Danish musical life. Several new works have been written especially for her.

Helene Gjerris trained at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen, but some of her professional secret may also come from several years of study at a London school for carnival and street performers. In contemporary music in particular, her charismatic performance comes into its own. At the beginning of her career Helene Gjerris sang Renaissance music in the vocal ensemble Ars Nova Copenhagen, and at the age of 24 she was a co-founder of the ensemble for contemporary music Figura Ensemble. On the European Baroque stages she has appeared in Handel's opera *Teseo* and Cavalli's opera *Giasone*. Among standard roles she has sung Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro* and the title roles in Rossini's *La cenerentola* and Bizet's *Carmen*, on among other stages the Royal Danish Theatre. She also sings in oratorios by Bach, Handel and Mozart and appears with Marlene Dietrich's repertoire in the vocal group Kopenhagen Kabarett.

On CDs from Dacapo you can hear Helene Gjerris in Per Nørgård's opera *Nuit des hommes* and the cantata *The Will-o'-the-Wisps Go to Town*, in Rued Langgaard's Late Romantic mystery play *Antichrist* and in contemporary music by Thomas Agerfeldt Olesen.

Helene Gjerris has received many awards including the Aksel Schiøtz Prize, the honorary prize of the Danish Composers' Society and the Reumert Prize. Helene Gjerris was recently appointed professor at The Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts, Southern Denmark.

www.helenegjerris.dk

INTRODUKTION ved Helene Gjerris

For nøjagtig 25 år siden havde jeg mit første intense møde med Per Nørgårds musik. Jeg var netop optaget på prøve i vokalsemblet Ars Nova, og en af de første opgaver var *Wie ein Kind*. Mine forudsætninger for at kunne indstudere musik af den sværhedsgrad var nærmest lig nul, men jeg kæmpede indædt med at lære min stemme, og min forbløffelse, fryd og betagelse var stor, da jeg omsider begyndte at kunne høre alle stemmerne gå op i en helhed. Dengang var jeg selvfølgelig ikke klar over, at oplevelsen skulle få stor betydning for den retning, min kunstneriske karriere siden kom til at tage.

Siden har jeg haft mange muligheder for at arbejde med Per Nørgårds musik i solistisk sammenhæng – blandt andet med operaen *Nuit des hommes* og kantaten *Lygte-mænd i byen*. De umiskendelige Nørgård'ske vokale linjer har til stadighed appelleret til min lyst til at udforske min stemmes muligheder og tage ekspressive virkemidler i brug, som ellers sjældent har deres berettigelse i den klassisk skolede stemmebrug.

I vinteren 2008 kørte jeg til Langeland og besøgte Per Nørgård. Min tanke var at lave en cd med en opsamling af vokalværker fra hele Pers produktion og hermed få mulighed for at sammenfatte alle de erfaringer, jeg havde gjort med hans musik gennem årene. I de følgende måneder udvekslede vi idéer til cd'ens repertoire og nåede frem til det resultat, som nu foreligger.

Det er blevet en forunderlig rejse gennem tiden i Per Nørgårds vokalmusik, hvor en rig og raffineret kammermusikalsk instrumentation belyser digtene og de forskellige sprog, og hvor man møder en komponist, som helt fra de tidligste værker afprøver reciterende og deklamatoriske virkemidler i brugen af sangstemmen; en metode, som kulminerer i værkerne fra 1980-erne, hvor disse elementer tages virkelig eksplicit i brug.

Det har været en bestandig udfordring at arbejde med materialet, men der er ingen tvivl om, at Per Nørgårds musik i en ganske særlig grad reflekterer og vinder genklang hos mig, og at der var en dybere betydning i min oplevelse af mødet med musikken for 25 år siden.

Helene Gjerris, juli 2012

PER NØRGÅRD (født 1932) er Danmarks store og originale komponist i tiden efter Anden Verdenskrig. Med sin livlige og følelsesfulde fantasi og sine sindrige strukturer har han flyttet grænser og åbnet op for nye musikalske landskaber og erkendelser, der udfordrer de udøvedes og lytternes musikalitet.

Per Nørgård er født i København, hvor hans forældre havde en forretning med brudekjoler og tøj til damer. Han har levet det meste af sit liv i Danmark, men han har også rejst vidt omkring i Østen og i Vesten. I sin studietid var Per Nørgård elev af Vagn Holmboe; samtidig nærede han stor beundring for finnen Jean Sibelius' musik.

Per Nørgård arbejdede i disse år med forestillingen om 'det nordlige sinds univers' forstået som en fornemmelse af, at naturen og lyset i de nordlige egne var med til at binde vores kulturer sammen. Senere udforskede han ligesom andre komponister i sin generation den centraleuropæiske, serielle musik. Dette var baggrunden for, at Per Nørgård i 1959 opfandt sin særlige 'uendelighedsrække' på basis af matematikeren Benoît Mandelbrots fraktalteorier. Skæve rytmer, der i mange tilfælde var bygget over det gyldne snits proportioner samt interferensfænomener blev ligeledes vigtige elementer i hans musik.

Omkring 1980 begyndte Per Nørgård igen at udvide sin kompositoriske palet, idet han ønskede at finde midler til at udtrykke de mørkere sider af menneskesindet. I forlængelse af dette komponerede han en række værker, der var inspireret af den skizofrene schweiziske kunstner, Adolf Wölfli. Blandt disse værker er der en del meget ekspressiv vokalmusik samt den 4. symfoni, som veksler mellem idyl og katastrofe, orden og kaos.

Vokalværkerne på denne cd er komponeret i 1950'erne, 60'erne og 1980'erne. For Per Nørgård har teksterne i meget høj grad været den afgørende inspiration for hans vokal-kompositioner. De er kraftfulde og hentet fra mange forskellige lande og sprogområder. Akkompagnementet til sangene er meget varieret i valg af instrumenter og den forfinede måde, de anvendes klangligt og strukturelt.

OM VÆRKERNE

I 1953, længe før Jess Ørnsbo debuterede som digter og Per Nørgård havde sin debut-koncert, komponerede Per Nørgård musik til Ørnsbos digt, *Solen så jeg*. Denne korte og intense sang handler om at modnes til at elske. Instrumentationen med fløjte, violin, bratsch og cello er lavet i 2010 i forbindelse med indspilningen af denne cd.

I de følgende år komponerede Per Nørgård en række 'Aftonland-værker' til tekster af Pär Lagerkvist, nemlig korværket *Aftonland* (1954), *To recitativer* samt *Sånger från "Aftonland"*. Sidstnævnte er fem sange om sorg, længsel og afsked. Per Nørgårds forestilling om 'det nordlige sinds univers' tog netop form under kompositionen af disse Lagerkvist-sange, og inspirationen fra det store forbillede Jean Sibelius er umiskendelig i den orkestralt klingende instrumentation af de næsten folkelodiske sanglinjer.

Per Nørgårds musik fra 1960'erne er repræsenteret ved to værker. I *Tre kærligheds-sange* sammenstilles et ganske kort digt af Arthur Rimbaud med to digte af Rainer Maria Rilke. *Tre kærlighedssange* var oprindelig komponeret for solist og orkester. Til denne cd-indspilning har Per Nørgård ominstrumenteret sangene til den besætning af musikere, der medvirker i cd'ens øvrige værker.

Værket, *Trois chansons de "L'Amour la poésie"* er komponeret til tekster af den franske surrealist, Paul Éluard. De kredser om søvnens, ravnens og den orangeblå jords relationer til den elskede. Tonesproget er dæmpet; den erotiske intensitet samler sig omkring sangerens og solofløjtes tæt omslyngende linjer.

Der er et stort og ekspressivt spring fra de tidlige værker til vokalværket, *Plutonian Ode*, som Per Nørgård komponerede over fragmenter af amerikaneren Allen Ginsbergs digt fra 1978 med samme titel. Her slår digter og komponist med piskende verbal intensitet hul på tidens frygtelige tabu: den totale, atomare udslettelse. Under inspiration af nogle ophold på Bali har Per Nørgård forestillet sig gengivelsen af dette besværgende digt, som en slags eksorcisme. Den vilde og omfangsrige arie beskriver Per Nørgård som "... en rytmisk intensiv opsang til plutoniet, anskuet som totaldestruktionens basale tomhed - sat over for menneskeåndens utrættelige vilje til at skabe sammenhæng og meningsfuldhed. Den konstante flertydighed i rytmen forener sig her med transformationen af ord i gradvise betydningsskift (som fx "at last" - "Atlas" - "alas")."

Day and Night fra 1982 har tekster af Ted Hughes og William Shakespeare. Ted Hughes digt, *A Kill*, er en beskrivelse af kvalerne ved at komme til verden, at blive født. Shakespeares balsamiske kærlighedserklæring bringer derimod natten og mørket i erindring, og er et kort uddrag fra *Romeo and Juliet*, akt II, scene III.

Entwicklungen (Udviklinger) er komponeret til to digte af Rainer Maria Rilke. Det første digt, *Kindheit*, kredser om de fjerne og mistede lange barndomseftermiddage. Det andet digt, *Die Genesende*, beskriver, hvordan livet spiller med den syge, indtil helbredelsen indtræder som et blidt og forførende kærtegn.

CD'ens sidste indslag, *Schlafen gehen, Schmerz und Not* er en fri version af Nørgårds korsats *Abendlied* (af *To Wölfl-Lieder* fra 1980). I dette "re-mix" à la 2012 har Helene Gjerris selv indsunget alle fire korstemmer, mens Gert Sørensen har tilføjet gamelan-instrumenter.

Eva Hvidt, cand. mag. og musikjournalist. Ekstern projektmedarbejder på Dansk Center for Musikudgivelse (DCM) på Det Kgl. Bibliotek.

HELENE GJERRIS

Man kan godt mestre både *Carmen*, barokmusik og den nyeste avantgarde. HELENE GJERRIS (f. 1968) kan i hvert fald, og hendes altfavnende talent har betaget publikum og komponister siden midten af 1990'erne. Allerede inden hun debuterede officielt i 1997, fremstod hun som en usædvanlig figur i dansk musikliv. Adskillige nye værker er skrevet specielt til hende.

Helene Gjerris er uddannet på Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium i København, men en del af hendes professionelle hemmelighed kommer måske også fra flere års studier på en London-skole for gøglere og gadekunstnere. Særligt inden for den ny musik kommer Helene Gjerris' karismatiske fremtræden til sin ret. I begyndelsen af sin karriere sang Helene Gjerris renæssancemusik i vokalgruppen Ars Nova Copenhagen, og som 24-årig var hun medstifter af ensemblet for ny musik Figura Ensemble. På de europæiske barokscener har Helene Gjerris optrådt i Händels opera *Teseo* og Cavallis opera *Giasone*. Af standardpartier har hun sunget Cherubino i *Figaros Bryllup* og titelpartierne i Rossinis *Askepot* og Bizets *Carmen*, bl.a. på Det Kongelige Teater. Hun synger også oratorier af Bach, Händel og Mozart og optræder med Marlene Dietrichs repertoire sammen med vokalgruppen København Kabarett.

På cd'er fra Dacapo kan man høre Helene Gjerris i Per Nørgårds opera *Nuit des hommes* og kantaten *Lygtemændene kommer til byen*, Rued Langgaards senromantiske mysteriespil *Antikrist* og i ny musik af Thomas Agerfeldt Olesen.

Helene Gjerris har modtaget mange priser, bl.a. Aksel Schiøtz Prisen, Dansk Tonekunstner Forenings hæderspris og Reumert-prisen. Helene Gjerris er for nyligt udnævnt til professor på Syddansk Musikkonservatorium & Skuespillerskole.

www.helenegjerris.dk

TWO RECITATIVES

*Pär Lagerkvist (1891-1974),
from "Aftonland", 1953*

[1] I Jag lyssnar till vinden

Jag lyssnar till vinden som sopar igen mina spår.
Vinden som ingenting minns
och som inte alls förstår eller bryr sig om vad
den gör,
men som är så vacker att lyssna till.
Den mjuka vinden,
mjuk som glömskan.

När den nya morgonen gryr
skall jag vandra vidare.
I den vindstilla gryningen skall jag börja
vandringen på nytt
med det allra första steget
i den underbart orörda sanden.

II Gammal genius

[2] Tunga är vingarna, tyngre än jag kann mig
ej längre lyfta.
Någonstans ovanför är det väl dag men inte
här i min klyfta.
Något inom mig var större än jag kom mig
att högre syfta.
Tung är min ving, tunga dess slag kan mig
ej längre lyfta.

En gång mot himlen steg jag i ljus, upp mot
det oerhörda brus,
dem jag nu bär som en börda.
Skönt är att leva, skönt är att tro, skönt är
det oerhörda.

TWO RECITATIVES

*Pär Lagerkvist (1891-1974),
from "Aftonland", 1953*

I I listen to the wind

I listen to the wind that wipes out my footprints.
The wind that remembers nothing,
that understands nothing nor cares what it does,
but is beautiful to listen to.
The soft wind,
soft as oblivion.

When the new morning breaks
I will wander on.
In wind-calmed dawn I will begin my
wandering anew
with the very first step
in the wonderfully undisturbed sand.

II Old genius

Heavy the wings, now, heavier than can lift
me any longer;
somewhere above I suppose it is day, but
not here in my cleft.
Something within me was greater than I
was able to aim so high.
Heavy my wing, heavy its beating can lift
me no longer.

Once to the heavens I rose in light, up to
the inconceivable roar
that I now bear as a burden.
Sweet is to live, sweet to believe, sweet is
the inconceivable.

Tungt är att gammal i klyftorna bo
och bära sin själ som en börda.

ENTWICKLUNGEN

*Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926),
from "Neue Gedichte", 1907*

I Kindheit

[3] Es wäre gut viel nachzudenken, um
von so Verlorenem etwas auszusagen,
von jenen langen Kindheit-Nachmittagen,
die so nie wiederkamen - und warum?

Noch mahnt es uns -: vielleicht in einem Regen,
aber wir wissen nicht mehr was das soll;
nie wieder war das Leben von Begegnen,
von Wiedersehn und Weitergehn so voll

wie damals, da uns nichts geschah als nur
was einem Ding geschieht und einem Tiere:
da lebten wir, wie Wesenliches, das Ihre
und wurden bis zum Rande voll Figur.

Und wurden so vereinsamt wie ein Hirt
und so mit großen Fernen überladen
und wie von weit berufen und berührt
und langsam wie ein langer neuer Faden
in jene Bilder-Folgen eingeführt,
in welchen nun zu dauern uns verwirrt.

II Die Genesende

[4] Wie ein Singen kommt und geht in Gassen
und sich nähert und sich wieder scheut,

Heavy to live old in the clefts
and bear your soul as a burden.

DEVELOPMENTS

*Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926),
from "Neue Gedichte", 1907*

I Childhood

It would be wise to ponder carefully
the words we speak of anything as lost
as those unending afternoons of childhood
that never came to us again - and why?

Still we recall them - maybe in a rain shower -
but we no longer know what it might mean;
never again was life so full of meetings,
of seeing again and then of passing on

as then, when nothing happened to us but
what happens to a thing and to a creature;
then we lived lives like theirs, and yet as humans,
and rounded out our figure to the edge.

Then we were made as lonely as a shepherd,
so overburdened with great distances,
as if cried out to, touched on, from afar,
and slowly, like a long, new-spun thread
were wound into those sequences of images
in which just to endure keeps us confused.

II The convalescent

As a singing comes and goes in the streets
approaching close then flitting away again

flügel Schlagend, manchmal fast zu fassen
dann wieder weit hinausgestreut:

spielt mit der Genesenden das Leben;
während sie, geschwächt und ausgeruht,
unbeholfen, um sich hinzugeben,
eine ungewohnte Geste tut.

Und sie fühlt es beinahe wie Verführung,
wenn die hartgewordne Hand, darin
Fieber waren voller Widersinn,
fernher, wie mit blühender Berührung,
zu lieblosen kommt ihr hartes Kinn.

fluttering its wings, sometimes graspable
and then again scattered far apart,

so life plays its game with the convalescent,
while she, weakened but fully rested now,
helplessly, as if abandoning herself,
some unaccustomed gesture makes.

And she feels it almost as seduction
when the stiffened fingers of the hand in which
the fever raged, wracked with senselessness
now from afar, like the touch of a flower,
come to caress the hardness of her chin.

PLUTONIAN ODE

Allen Ginsberg (1926-1997), 1978

Recitation (introduction)

- [5] This ode to you, O Poets and Orators to come, you
father Whitman as I join your side, you Congress
and American people, you present meditators,
spiritual friends & teachers, you O Master of the Diamond Arts,
Take this wheel of syllables in hand, these vowels and
consonants to breath's end
take this inhalation of black poison to your heart, breathe
out this blessing from your breast on our creation
forests cities oceans deserts rocky flats and mountains
in the Ten Directions pacify with exhalation,
enrich this Plutonian Ode to explode its empty thunder
through earthen thought-worlds
Magnetize this howl with heartless compassion, destroy
this mountain of Plutonium with ordinary mind
and body speech,
thus empower this Mind-guard spirit gone out, gone
out, gone beyond, gone beyond me, Wake space,
so Ah!

I Recitation

- [6] What new element before us unborn in nature? Is there
a new thing under the Sun?
At last inquisitive Whitman a modern epic, detonative,
poisonous theme
First penned Scientific by Doctor Seaborg with unmindful hand
named for Death's planet through the
sea beyond Uranus
whose chthonic ore fathers this magma-teared Lord of
Hades, Sire of avenging Furies, Hell-
King worshipped once
with black sheep throats cut, priest's face averted from

underground mysteries in a single temple at Eleusis,
 Spring-green Persephone nuptial to his inevitable Shade,
 Demeter mother of asphodel weeping dew,
 her daughter stored in salty caverns under white snow,
 black hail, grey winter rain or Polar ice,
 immemorable seasons before
 Fish flew in Heaven, before a Ram died by the starry
 bush, before the Bull stamped sky and earth
 or Twins inscribed their memories in clay or Crab'd
 flood washed memory from the skull, or Lion sniffed the
 lilac breeze in Eden --
 Before the Great Year began turning its twelve signs,
 ere constellations wheeled for twenty-four thousand
 sunny years
 slowly round their axis in Sagittarius, one hundred
 sixty-seven thousand times returning to this night

O radioactive Nemesis were you there at the beginning
 blind dumb tongueless unsmelling blast of Disillusion?
 I manifest your Baptismal Word after four billion years
 I guess your birthday in Earthling Night, I salute your
 dreadful presence last majestic as the Gods,
 Jehova, Elohim, Ialdabaoth, Iao, Aeon from Aeon
 born ignorant in an Abyss of Light,
 Sophia's reflections glittering thoughtful galaxies,
 whirlpools of starspume silver-thin as hairs of Einstein!
 Father Whitman I celebrate a matter that renders self oblivion!

II Aria

7 Manufactured Spectre of human reason!
 O Solidified imago of practitioner in Black Arts
 I dare your Reality,
 I challenge your very being!
 I publish your cause and effect!
 I turn the Wheel of Mind on your three hundred tons!
 Your awful appellation enters mankind's ear
 I embody your ultimate powers!
 My oratory advances on your vaunted Mystery!
 I sing your form at last.

Behind your concrete and iron walls
 inside your fortress of rubber & translucent silicon shields
 through filtered cabinets and baths of lathe oil,
 my tones resound in robot glove boxes and ingot cans
 in electric vaults inert of atmosphere, I enter with spirit
 out loud into your fuel rod drums
 underground on soundless thrones and beds of lead

O density! This weightless anthem trumpets transcendent
 through hidden chambers
 and breaks into the infernal rooms over your bastard vibration
 this measured harmony floats audible,
 this voice is honey and water
 Poured on floor, I call your name with hollow vowels,
 I psalm your Fate close by, near deathless ever at your side
 And cast the spell of destiny that covers the dread of tomb
 prophetic with emptiness, o doomed Plutonium.

TROIS CHANSONS DE “L’AMOUR, LA POÉSIE”

Paul Éluard (1895-1952), from “L’amour, la poésie”, 1929

I Le sommeil

- [8] Le sommeil a pris ton empreinte
Et la colore de tes yeux

II Les corbeaux

- [9] Les corbeaux battent la campagne
La nuit s’éteint
Pour une tête qui s’éveille
Les cheveux blancs le dernier rêve
Les mains se font jour de leur sang

Une étoile nommée azur
Et dont la forme est terrestre

Folle des cris à pleine gorge
Folle des rêves
Folle aux chapeaux de sœur cyclone
Enfance brève folle aux grands vents
Comment ferais-tu la belle la coquette

Ne rira plus
L’ignorance l’indifférence
Ne révèlent pas leur secret
Tu ne sais pas saluer à temps
Ni te comparer aux merveilles
Tu ne m’écoutes pas

Mais ta bouche partage l’amour
Et c’est par ta bouche
Et c’est derrière la buée de nos baisers
Que nous sommes ensemble

THREE SONGS FROM “L’AMOUR, LA POÉSIE”

Paul Éluard (1895-1952), from “L’amour, la poésie”, 1929

I Sleep

Sleep took your imprint
And the colour of your eyes.

II The Ravens

The ravens scour the countryside
The night dies away
For a head that wakes
The white hair the last dream
The hands emerge from their blood

A star called azure
Whose form is of the earth

Mad with full-throated cries
Mad with dreams
Mad in the hats of sister cyclone
Brief mad childhood in the great winds
How would you play the beauty the coquette

Will laugh no more
Ignorance indifference
Do not reveal their secret
You do not know the art of timely greeting
Nor of comparing yourself to wonders
You do not listen to me

But your mouth shares love
And it is through your mouth
It is behind the mist of our kisses
That we are together

III La terre

- [10] La terre est bleue comme une orange
Jamais une erreur les mots ne mentent pas
Ils ne vous donnent plus à chanter
Au tour des baisers de s’entendre
Les fous et les amours
Elle sa bouche d’alliance
Tous les secrets tous les sourires
Et quels vêtements d’indulgence
À la croire toute nue.

Les guêpes fleurissent vert
L’aube se passe autour du cou
Un collier de fenêtres
Des ailes couvrent les feuilles
Tu as toutes les joies solaires
Tout le soleil sur la terre
Sur les chemins de ta beauté.

THREE LOVE SONGS

I L’étoile a pleuré rose

*Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891),
from “Poésies”, 1870-71*

- [11] L’étoile a pleuré rose au cœur de tes oreilles,
L’infini roulé blanc de ta nuque à tes reins
La mer a perlé rousse à tes mammes vermeilles
Et l’Homme saigné noir à ton flanc souverain.

III The earth

The earth is blue as an orange
No mistake the words do not lie
They give you no more to sing
It’s the turn of the kisses to be heard
The madmen and the love affairs
She her wedding-ring mouth
All the secrets all the smiles
And what vestments of indulgence
To believe her quite naked.

The wasps bloom green
The dawn passes around her neck
A necklace of windows
Wings cover the leaves
You have all the solar joys
All of the sun on the earth
On the pathways of your beauty

THREE LOVE SONGS

I The star has wept pink

*Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891),
from “Poésies”, 1870-71*

The star has wept pink in the heart of your ears,
Infinity rolled out white from your neck to your loins
The sea has beaded russet on your crimson breasts
And Man has bled black on your sovereign womb.

II Liebes-Lied (Wie soll ich meine Seele halten)

Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926),
from "Neue Gedichte", 1907

- [12] Wie soll ich meine Seele halten, daß
sie nicht an deine rührt? Wie soll ich sie
hinheben über dich zu andern Dingen?
Ach gerne möcht ich sie bei irgendwas
Verlorenem im Dunkel unterbringen
an einer fremden stillen Stelle, die
nicht weiterschwingt, wenn deine Tiefen schwingen.

Doch alles, was uns anrührt, dich und mich,
nimmt uns zusammen wie ein Bogenstrich,
der aus zwei Saiten eine Stimme zieht.
Auf welches Instrument sind wir gespannt?
Und welcher Geiger hat uns in der Hand?
O süßes Lied.

III Opfer

Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926),
from "Neue Gedichte", 1907

- [13] O wie blüht mein Leib aus jeder Ader
duftender, seitdem ich dich erkenn;
sieh, ich gehe schlanker und gerader,
und du wartest nur – : wer bist du denn?

Sieh: ich fühle, wie ich mich entferne,
wie ich Altes, Blatt um Blatt, verlier.
Nur dein Lächeln steht wie lauter Sterne
über dir und bald auch über mir.

II Love Song (How shall I keep my soul)

Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926),
from "Neue Gedichte", 1907

How shall I hold my soul back, hold it so
it does not touch yours? How am I to raise
it up above you, up to other things?
Oh how I'd like to lay it somewhere low
and lost in some deep darkness far away
in some still place that will not resonate
responding to your depths in sympathy.

Yet everything that touches you and me
plays us together like a violin bow
that draws a single voice out of two strings.
What instrument is strung with us, then? And
What violinist holds us in his hand?
O sweetest song.

III Sacrifice

Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926),
from "Neue Gedichte", 1907

O how my body blooms from every vein
sweet-scented since aware of you I grew;
see how I walk more slender and more straight,
and all you do is wait; so who are you?

Look: I can feel myself diminishing,
as if my old self, leaf by leaf, is shed.
Only your smile remains, nothing but stars
shining on you and soon upon me too.

DAY AND NIGHT

I A Kill

Ted Hughes (1930-1998), from "Crow", 1970

- [14] Flogged lame with legs
Shot through the head with balled brains
Shot blind with eyes
Nailed down by his own ribs
Strangled just short of his last gasp
By his own windpipe
Clubbed unconscious by his own heart.

Seeing his life stab through him, a dream flash
As he drowned in his own blood

Dragged under by the weight of his guts

Uttering a bowel-emptying cry which was his
roots tearing out

Of the bedrock atom
Gaping his mouth and letting the cry rip
through him as at a distance
And smashed into the rubbish of the ground

He managed to hear, faint and far – 'it's a boy!'

Then everything went black.

II Silver-sweet Sound

(William Shakespeare)

- [15] How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
Like softest music to attending ears!

SOLEN SÅ JEG

Jess Ørnsbo (f. 1932), 1953

- [16] Solen så jeg, syntes intet mere var
sind, menneske.
Efter os kommer ingen.

Sind går i skred
som kornet på marken dræer,
det er tid at mene det sidste .

Solen så jeg,
ord blev til ord
gerning til gerning
en dag må du elske.

SÅNGER FRÅN "AFTONLAND"

Pär Lagerkvist (1891-1974),
fra "Aftonland", 1953

- [17] I Nr. 1, Allt är så fjärran idag
Allt är så underligt fjärran idag,
så långt långt borta.
Inne i molnen hörs vingarnas slag
av fåglar, långt långt borta.

Klar som en klocka av silver och glas,
långt långt borta,
ljuder en fågelröst spröd som glas
i en himmel långt långt borta.

Ensam i kvällsljuset lyssnar jag.
Vad dagarna börjar bli korta.
Hösten har kommit. Snart skymmer min dag.
Jag hör vingar så långt långt borta.

I SAW THE SUN

Jess Ørnsbo (b. 1932), 1953

I saw the sun, thought nothing was any longer
mind, human.
After us no one comes.

Mind begins to float away
like the rye clouds over the field,
it's time to think the last thing.

I saw the sun,
word became word
deed became deed,
one day you must love.

SONGS FROM "EVENING LAND"

Pär Lagerkvist (1891-1974),
from "Aftonland", 1953

I No. 1, Everything is so far away today
Everything is so strangely far away today
so far far away.
Inside the clouds you hear the beat of wings
of birds far, far away.

Clear as a bell of silver and glass,
far far away,
sounds the voice of a bird, brittle as glass
in a sky far far away.

All alone in the evening light I listen.
How the days are beginning to grow short.
Autumn has come. Soon my day will darken.
I hear wings so far far away.

I Nr. 2, Du människa som står vid stranden av mig

- [18] Du människa som står vid stranden av mig,
lyss till min sång.
lyss till en liten liten del av min sång,
min eviga sång
mod stranden.

Gå inte din väg. Vänd dig inte bort.
Du förströr mig med din närvaro
som jag förströr dig med mina vågor's sorl.
Du främmande, du vars ansikte är så
vackert tillfälligt.

Varför gör jag dig sorgen?
Varför bliver ditt ansikte så svårmodigt av
min sång,
av det evigas sång
av vågarnas sång mot stranden?
Varför bedrövar jag dig?

I Nr. 3, Det är om aftonen man bryter upp

- [19] Det är om aftonen man bryter upp
vid solnedgången.
Det är då man lämnar allt.

Tanken tar ner sina tält av spindelväv
och hjärtat glömmar varför det har ängslats.
Ökenvandrar'n överger sin lägerplats,
som snart skall utplånas av sanden,
och fortsätter sin färd i nattens stillhet,
ledd av gåtfulla stjärnor.

II Nr. 2, Nu är det sommarmorgon

- [21] Nu är det sommarmorgon
och jordens högtidsstund,

I No. 2, O human, you who stand upon my shore

O human, you who stand upon my shore,
listen to my song.
Listen to a small small part of my song,
my eternal song
against the shore.

Do not go away. Do not turn away.
You amuse me with your presence
as I amuse you with the song of my waves.
Stranger, you whose face is so prettily fleeting.

Why do I make you sad?
Why is your face made so mournful by my song,
by the song of the eternal,
by the song of waves against the shore?
Why do I make you grieve?

I No. 3, It is at evening that we depart

It is at evening that we depart
at the setting of the sun.
That is when we leave everything.

Thought takes down its tent of cobwebs,
the heart forgets why it has been dismayed.
The desert wanderer leaves his camping-ground
soon to be levelled by the sand,
pursues his journey in the still of night
steered by mysterious stars.

II No. 2, Now it is summer morning

Now it is summer morning
and the festive time of the earth.

nu ringer blåa klockor
sin frid i helig lund
av rönnar, björk och sälg.
Nu är det jordisk helg.

Nu sänker himlen stilla
sig över jorden ner
och lyss till hennes klockor
som den i grönskan ser.
I andakt allting står
som spröda klangen når.

Långt bort är kalla stjärnor,
långt bort är gränslös rymd,
men av det sommarblåa
all sorg är undanskymd.
Allt är blott jordisk frid
en stund vid sommartid.

II Nr. 3, Tacka vill jag

[22] Tacka vill jag blommorna och molnen,
träden och sommarhimmeln,
det svala morgonljuset
och kvällsvinden som stryker över ljungen.
Så som den som bryter upp ifrån ett gästfritt hus
där ingenting fattas, där han bjudits på allt,
så vill jag tacka för hemmet jag gästade,
för människohemmet.
Med handen på grinden vill jag se mig
tillbaka, som om
jag skulle kunna minnas det som jag lämnar.
Och sedan vill jag se framåt igen, fastän hemlös.

Now blue bells are ringing
their peace in the sacred grove
of rowan, birch and willow.
Now is the feast of the earth.

Now the sky sinks quietly
down over the earth
and listens to her bells
that it sees among the green.
Everything stands devoutly
that hears the frail sounds.

Far off are cold stars,
far off is boundless space,
but from this summer blue
all sorrow is hidden away.
All is earthly peace
for a moment in summertime.

II No. 3, I will thank

I will thank the flowers and the clouds.
the trees and the summer sky,
the cool morning light
and the evening wind that sweeps across
the heather.
Like one who takes his leave from a
hospitable house
where nothing is wanting, where he was offered all,
so will I give my thanks for the home I guested,
the human home.
My hand on the gate, I will look back, as if
I were to be granted remembrance of what
I am leaving.
And afterwards I will look forward again,
although homeless.

III Det är om aftonen man bryter upp

[23] Det är om aftonen man bryter upp,
vid solnedgången.
Det är då man lämnar allt.

Tanken tar ner sina tält av spindelväv
och hjärtat glömmar varför det har ängslats.
Ökenvandrarerna överger sin lägerplats,
som snart skall utplånas av sanden,
och fortsätter sin färd i nattens stillhet,
ledd av gåtfulla stjärnor.

SCHLAFEN GEHEN, SCHMERZ UND NOT

Adolf Wölfli (1864-1930)

[24] Schön ist's der Dämmerstunde:
Traulichem, Alleine sein
Tiefes Schweigen in der Runde
Blasses Träumen wiegt mich ein.
Auf die leicht verhauchten Scheiben
strahlt verbleichend, Abendrot
Gold und weisse Wolken treiben
Schlafen gehen, Schmerz und Not.

III It is at evening that we depart

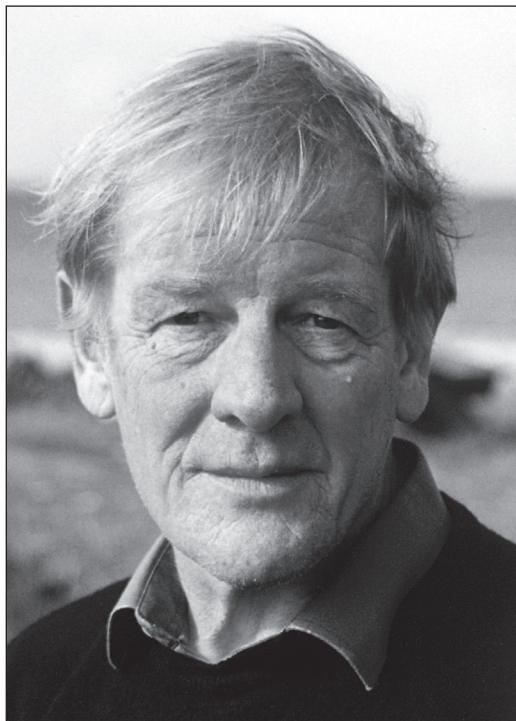
It is at evening that we depart
at the setting of the sun.
That is when we leave everything.

Thought takes down its tent of cobwebs,
the heart forgets why it has been dismayed.
The desert wanderer leaves his camping-ground
soon to be levelled by the sand,
pursues his journey in the still of night
steered by mysterious stars.

OFF TO SLEEP, PAIN AND TROUBLE

Adolf Wölfli (1864-1930)

Beautiful the twilight hours:
Intimate, solitude,
Deep silence all around
Pale dreaming rocks me away.
On the lightly breathered panes
Fading shines the evening glow
White and golden clouds driving
Off to sleep, pain and trouble.



PER NØRGÅRD

DDD

Recorded at the Royal Danish Academy of Music from May 2010 to May 2011

Recording producer and mastering: Gert Sørensen

Sound engineers: Mark Anthony Ford and Jonas Nakel

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Liner notes: Eva Hvidt and Helene Gjerris

English translation: James Manley

Proofreader: Svend Ravnkilde

Photo p. 30: © Helle Rahbæk; pp. 1, 32 and back cover: © Denise Burt

Artwork: Denise Burt, www.elevator-design.dk

Publisher: Edition Wilhelm Hansen AS, www.ewh.dk

Dacapo Records and Helene Gjerris acknowledge, with gratitude, the financial support of Augustinus Fonden, KODA's Collective Blank Tape Remuneration, Solistforeningen af 1921, Beckett Fonden, Dansk Musiker Forbund and Dansk Kapelmesterforening

This CD has been recorded in cooperation with the Royal Danish Academy of Music and is part of Helene Gjerris' artistic development work there as an assistant professor



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