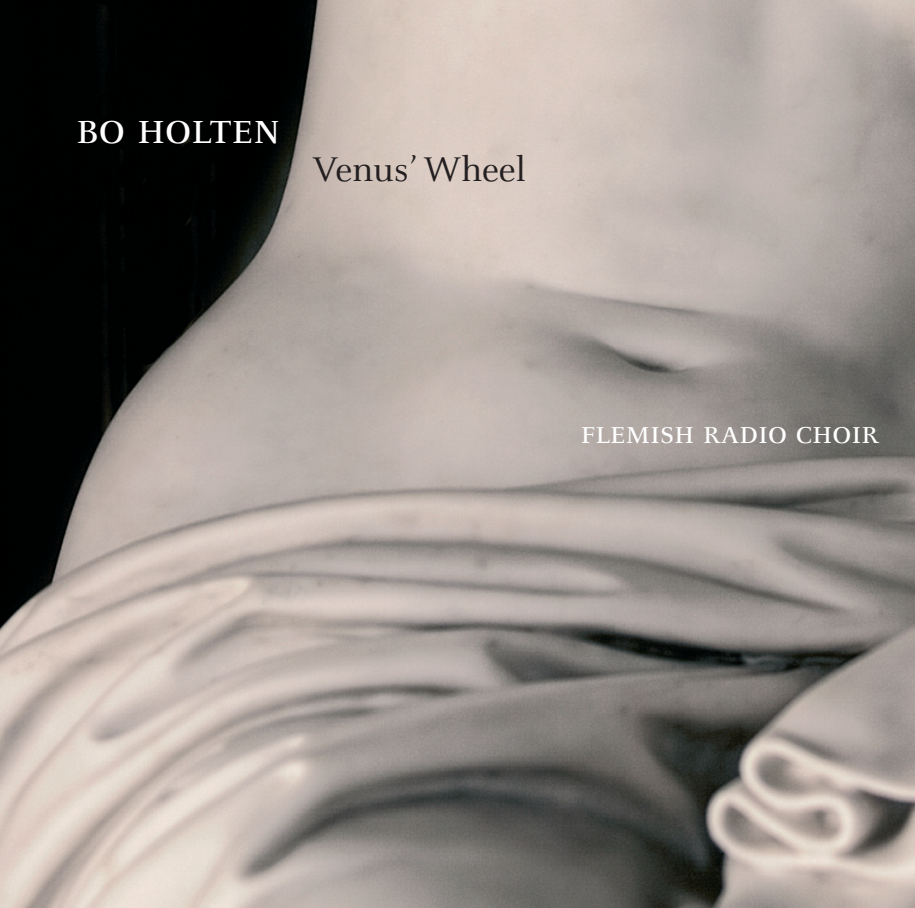


A black and white photograph of a classical statue's torso and draped fabric. The statue's skin is smooth and light-colored, contrasting with the dark, shadowed background. The fabric is draped in deep, flowing folds, creating a sense of movement and texture. The lighting highlights the contours of the body and the folds of the cloth.

BO HOLTEN

Venus' Wheel

FLEMISH RADIO CHOIR

BO HOLTEN

Venus' Wheel

FLEMISH RADIO CHOIR

Bo Holten, conductor

RÖMISCHE ELEGIE (GOETHE) (2011) *

for mixed choir and cello 12:59

[1] Elegie I 6:21

[2] Elegie V ** 6:39

Luc Tooten, cello

** Joris Derder, baritone

[3] PS. 23: DOMINUS REGIT ME (2005)

for 5-part choir 6:23

[4] GUSTAV MAHLER: ICH BIN DER WELT ABHANDEN GEKOMMEN (1901)

*arranged for baritone and 8-part choir by Bo Holten (2010) ** 7:44

Johan Reuter, baritone

CANTIGAS D'AMIGO (2010)

5 love lyrics of medieval Portugal set for female voices a cappella 19:00

[5] No. 1. How very great my grief 4:22

[6] No. 2. In the green grasses 3:55

[7] No. 3. ... to see my friend there 2:51

[8] No. 4. Lelia doura 4:00

[9] No. 5. ... prepare to go 3:54

[10] HANDEL WITH CARE (VARIATIONS ON DARWIN) (2009) *

for two sopranos and mixed choir 5:20

Hilde Venken and Sarah Van Mol, sopranos

ROTA VENERIS (2008) *

3 gothic love songs for mixed choir 11:07

[11] I Quia sub umbraculum 3:26

[12] II Aprili tempore ** 5:02

[13] III Plangit nonna 2:41

** Hilde Venken, soprano

Total: 62:35

* World première recordings

Handel with Care was commissioned by Klara and the Flemish Radio Choir



Dacapo is supported by the Danish Arts Council Committee for Music



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BO HOLTEN stands out in several ways from the other Danish composers and conductors of his time. In the first place it is essential for him to combine the roles of performing and creative artist. Throughout his career he has devoted as much energy and professionalism to the work of conducting as to composing. In addition, as a composer he has seen his music performed frequently and sought-after, and yet rejected as old-fashioned or banal by many composer colleagues. And finally, as a conductor Holten has always put great effort into unearthing new music, both newly composed music (he has conducted about 190 first performances) and unknown or neglected music from earlier times.

Bo Holten studied musicology and bassoon; as a conductor and composer he is self-taught. In 1979 Holten founded the vocal ensemble Ars Nova, of which he was the regular conductor until 1996. The ensemble was ground-breaking in the Nordic countries and quickly attracted international attention with its high artistic standard and its personal take on the sonorities of both brand new contemporary and very early music (medieval and Renaissance). In 1996 Bo Holten founded the vocal ensemble Musica Ficta, in which he continued the work with early music, and where his experience from the work with this repertoire is also applied to the music of other epochs – for example the Danish national song repertoire. Holten is internationally sought after as a guest conductor; from 1990 until 2005 he was principal guest conductor of the BBC Singers in London and from 2008 until 2011 chief conductor of the Flemish Radio Choir in Brussels.

However, both as a conductor and as a composer Holten has also always been interested in other genres than choral music. He has conducted all the Danish and several other Nordic symphony orchestras, typically in oratorios, early music, contemporary music (including his own) and music that is not on the standard symphonic repertoire. With the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra, for example, he has recorded a number of inter-

nationally acclaimed CDs of music by the English composer Frederick Delius (1862-1934). As a composer Holten has written over 100 works, among these two symphonies, five solo concertos, seven operas, chamber music, film music and much else, including about 40 works for a cappella choir.

As a rule Bo Holten's music has been positively received by the general public as well as musicians and choral singers. There is typically something direct and familiar about it which – compared with much other present-day composition music – has made it relatively popular. But a new development in recent years is that Bo Holten has also experienced far great acceptance from composer colleagues and other music professionals. Not least the very positive reception of Holten's major full-length opera *The Visit of the Royal Physician* (2009) has shown that today, among both audiences and professionals, there is a more tolerant attitude to diversity in musical expression; that one can write as one likes, and that music can be incisive, interesting and innovative without necessarily being modernist or avant-garde in its idioms.

Holten believes that it is first and foremost the world around him that has changed. He himself writes music as he has always done. He goes for the clear and distinctive in expression and describes his music as fundamentally “dramatic” in the sense that the listener must be able to experience a drama, a development in the music.

Earlier, Bo Holten was accused of being a neo-Romantic who wrote superficial and semi-sentimental music. And this is a great misunderstanding, he thinks. In the 1970s and 1980s he made a considerable effort to engage with and perform the modernist music of the time. And although he often opposed it and considered it unnecessarily inaccessible, his own music was also influenced by post-war modernism; the early works were more complex than those he writes today. However, what has endured from modernism – and from early music – is his thorough, systematic approach – for example taking a point of departure in certain fixed structures or a particular compositional principle.

The present CD has its specific background in Bo Holten's close collaboration with the Flemish Radio Choir over the past few years. It features a number of new examples of the wide scope of the choral composer Bo Holten, including the way he uses the whole of

musical history with supreme craftsmanship as a framework and sounding board, and as direct inspiration for his own contemporary idiom.

Roman Elegies (2011) is based on two of the 20 elegies that Goethe wrote in connection with a stay in Rome in his early youth. The poems are related to the love elegies of antiquity (Ovid's for example) and in highly poetic imagery describe an "I" (Goethe himself?) who experiences the ancient ruins and manuscripts in the Eternal City. It all seems rather dusty and empty to him – until he meets a young Roman woman with whom he subsequently spends all his nights. Inspired by this love affair, the beauty of all the poetry and art of antiquity unfolds for the poet; by tracing the shape of his beloved's breast he understands the beauty of the marble!

In *Elegy no. 1* the poet has not yet met his beloved. The dead city seems empty and gloomy, he feels that something is concealed from him. This is reflected in the music by 'empty' chords and minor-tinged harmonies. The solo cello does however hint at the presence of something warm-blooded; it stands – like Goethe – alone among the almost lapidary columns of vocal harmonies.

In *Elegy no. 5* the poet meditates on his own happiness; by day he devotes himself to the art treasures of antiquity; by night he devotes himself to the erotic. The poetic persona has now acquired a voice in the form of a baritone soloist around whom the cello with its female forms clings fondly. With the cello, the eight-part choir forms an almost orchestral background for the unfolding narrative of the subject. The choir sheds a melodic light – the warm haze of Rome? – over the sensual, warm-blooded story.

Dominus regit me (2005) was written for a booklet with settings by a number of Danish composers of Psalm 23 from the Old Testament, *Dominus regit me*: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want". The text offers great solace and profound gratitude over simply being alive and enjoying existence as it is.

Holten draws on his thorough familiarity with Renaissance music. The piece begins polyphonically with an ingenious weave of voices criss-crossing. Gradually the parts

come together more, as in a madrigal. Throughout the work the music stays close to the text, and with the progression from the polyphonic to the homophonic it is as if the focus is finally on the concluding statement; "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

Precisely with a Biblical text it is appropriate to use the composition techniques of early music. Here there is no point in elaborating the music as in the Roman elegies – that would be far too specific and personal; the Biblical texts require a certain distance and more reserved expression. However, the harmonies are very much of today; here Holten follows in the wake of composers like Francis Poulenc and Bernhard Lewkovitch, who also found inspiration in early music but gave it present-day harmonic expression.

Gustav Mahler: Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen (Holten, 2010) is an arrangement for baritone soloist and 8-part choir of one of Mahler's *Rückert-Lieder*. There is already an often-performed arrangement for 16-voice choir by Clytus Gottwald, which Holten has himself conducted a few times. But Holten does not really think that Gottwald does justice to Mahler's song; among other things it lacks a soloist who can express the "Ich" that is so central to the text.

Holten takes his cue from Mahler's piano setting but with Mahler's own sublime orchestral setting firmly in mind. The choir thus functions as an (orchestral) accompaniment for the soloist. Holten has taken pains to stay as close to the model as possible within the constraints of what in fact *can* be sung by a choir. And he has striven to function solely as an arranger and as far as possible to avoid mixing his own personality with Mahler's.

Cantigas d'amigo (2010) was written at the request of the Skt. Annæ Girls' Choir. Bo Holten thought long about which texts would be suitable for these young girls standing there in their budding adolescence. Quite by chance he came upon a large collection of medieval Portuguese poems, and with an excellent English translation too. It was fashio-

nable in 13th-14th-century Portugal for male poets to write as if they were young girls; maidens' dreams of boys and men out at sea or at war or otherwise unreachable.

Holten has chosen five texts whose content and musicality call for various tempos and moods. The texts are highly repetitive in their basic structure, and this is reflected in music that draws inspiration from medieval music (bourdon, canon and echo effects) and from American minimalism (motifs that repeat cyclically with minimal shifts).

But first and foremost Bo Holten exploits the delicacy of the girls' choir: they can make chords sound fantastic, and they have a sound that is slightly innocent yet luxurious and sensual.

Handel with Care (Variations on Darwin) (2009). Bo Holten was asked to write some variations on a piece from Handel's Water Music to celebrate the Handel Year 2009 (the 250th anniversary of his death). But 2009 was also a Darwin year (the bicentenary of the naturalist's birth and the 150th anniversary of *The Origin of Species*), and since Holten is in his own words a hard-line Darwinist, he also felt like involving Darwin in this anniversary piece.

In connection with the Darwin year Holten had read among other things Darwin's memoirs, where there is a passage in which Darwin writes with impressive brevity and humility about how he got the idea for his theory of evolution. Holten now has the altos and the men sing – or perhaps rather recite – this short text; in so doing they simply lay down a harmonic ground in the form of a chord sequence and have almost no melodic motion. Darwin's profoundly revolutionary theory is chanted here as if it were a Catholic credo.

Gradually the sopranos enter in three groups with the most beautiful melodies in the form of one little Handel quotation after another in both text and melody – for example from *The Messiah* ("I know that my Redeemer liveth"), *Rinaldo* ("Lascia ch'io pianga") and *Water Music*. In some places the soprano parts are quite demanding; it has something of the showpiece about it. With this little musical joke Holten manages to mark two anniversaries at once that otherwise have nothing to do with each other.

Rota Veneris (2008). After the completion of the full-length opera *The Visit of the Royal Physician* Holten felt completely emptied of ideas for new compositions. However, in order to begin somewhere he took up some anonymous motets from the 1300s and decided to elaborate further on them. The original text was replaced by other medieval texts that speak of widely different aspects of love. *Rota Veneris*, the Wheel of Venus, is a concept from the Middle Ages that describes how everything in love has its ups and downs.

The original pieces are in two and three parts. To various extents Bo Holten has added new parts, most simply in *Aprili tempore*, where an upper voice in the form of a soprano soloist has been laid over the original piece. In the soloist we meet a young girl who can tragically only see her beloved in dreams; there is great drama in the expression of the solo part over the underlying medieval texture.

Quia sub umbraculum is about the elevated sort of love where a damsel sits patiently waiting for her knight – her Mr. Right. Here Holten has worked the three-part original into a grandiose six-part madrigal-like piece; while in the last piece, the Nun's Lament, he has written a virtuoso dance with parts that constantly try to drown one another out, thus emphasizing the comic mood of the text.

Klaus Møller-Jørgensen is a music journalist and freelance programme producer for DR. He also works as an information officer for the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Aarhus.

BO HOLTEN skiller sig på flere måder ud blandt tidens øvrige danske komponister og dirigenter. For det første er det essentielt for ham at kombinere rollen som udøvende og skabende kunstner. Gennem hele sit virke har han med lige store dele energi og professionalisme kastet sig over arbejdet som både dirigent og komponist. Dernæst har han som komponist oplevet både at hans musik bliver flittigt opført og efterspurgt, og at den er blevet afvist som gammeldags eller banal af mange komponistkolleger. Endelig har Holten som dirigent altid lagt et stort arbejde i at opstøve ny musik, både nykomponeret musik (han har dirigeret ca. 190 uropførelser) og ukendt eller overset musik af ældre dato.

Bo Holten har studeret musikvidenskab og fagot, som dirigent og komponist er han autodidakt. I 1979 stiftede Holten vokalgruppen *Ars Nova*, som han var fast dirigent for frem til 1996. Ensemblet var banebrydende i Norden og vakte hurtigt international opmærksomhed med sit høje kunstneriske niveau og sit personlige bud på klangbehandling af både helt nykomponeret og meget gammel musik (middelalder og renæssance). I 1996 stiftede Bo Holten vokalensemblet *Musica Ficta*, hvor han viderefører arbejdet med den tidlige musik og hvor erfaringerne fra arbejdet med dette repertoire også bruges på andre epokers musik, eksempelvis den danske sangskat. Holten er internationalt efterspurgt som gæstedirigent og var fra 1990 til 2005 *Principal Guest Conductor* ved *BBC Singers* i London og fra 2008 til 2011 *chefdirigent* for *Det Flamske Radiokor* i Bruxelles.

Både som dirigent og som komponist har Holten dog også altid interesseret sig for andet end kormusik. Han har dirigeret alle danske og adskillige nordiske symfoniorkestre, typisk i oratorier, tidlig musik, ny musik (bl.a. sin egen) og musik som ikke hører til det symfoniske standardrepertoire. Eksempelvis har han med Aarhus Symfoniorkester indspillet et antal internationalt roste CD'er med musik af engelske *Frederick Delius* (1862-1934). Som komponist har Holten skrevet over 100 værker, heraf 2 symfonier, 5 solokoncerter, 7 operaer, kammermusik, filmmusik og meget andet, herunder ca. 40 værker for kor a cappella.

Bo Holtens musik er som hovedregel blevet positivt modtaget af publikum og blandt musikere og korsangere. Der er typisk noget umiddelbart og noget genkendeligt over den, som – i sammenligning med meget andet nutidig kompositionsmusik – har gjort den relativt populær. Men som noget nyt har Bo Holten i de senere år også oplevet en langt større accept fra komponistkolleger og andre professionelle musikfolk. Ikke mindst den meget positive modtagelse af Holtens store helaftensopera “*Livlægens besøg*” (2009) har vist, at der i dag både blandt publikum og blandt professionelle er en mere tolerant holdning til forskellige former for musikalske udtryk; at man kan skrive som man vil, og at musik godt kan være dybtstikkende, interessant og nyskabende uden nødvendigvis at være meget modernistisk eller avantgardistisk i sit udtryk.

Holten mener, at det først og fremmest er verden omkring ham, der har forandret sig. Selv skriver han musik som han altid har gjort. Han går efter at være klar og tydelig i udtrykket og beskriver sin musik som grundlæggende “dramatisk” i den forstand, at lytteren skal kunne opleve et drama, en udvikling i musikken.

Tidligere blev Bo Holten beskyldt for at være en neoromantiker, der skrev overfladisk og halvsentimental musik. Og det er en stor misforståelse, mener han selv. I 70'erne og 80'erne gjorde han en betydelig indsats for at sætte sig ind i og opføre tidens modernistiske musik. Og selvom han opponerede mod den og fandt den unødigt vanskelig tilgængelig, så var hans egen musik også præget af efterkrigstidens modernisme, de tidlige værker var mere komplekse, end det han skriver i dag. Hvad der imidlertid hænger ved fra modernismen – og fra den tidlige musik – det er at gå meget grundigt og systematisk til værks. Eksempelvis ved at tage udgangspunkt i nogle faste strukturer eller et bestemt kompositionsprincip.

Nærværende CD er især blevet til på baggrund af Bo Holtens tætte samarbejde med *Det Flamske Radiokor* gennem de senere år. Den rummer en række nye eksempler på bredden af korkomponisten Bo Holtens virke, herunder hvordan han med stor håndværksmæssig dygtighed bruger hele musikhistorien som ramme og klangbund og som direkte inspiration for sit eget, nutidige udtryk.

Romerske elegier (2011) er komponeret over to af Goethes i alt 20 elegier, som han skrev i forbindelse med et ophold i Rom i sin tidlige ungdom. Digtene knytter an til antikkens kærlighedslegier (Ovid bl.a.) og beskriver i yderst poetiske vendinger et “jeg” (Goethe selv?), der oplever de gamle ruiner og manuskripter i den evige stad, Rom. Det hele forekommer ham noget støvet og tomt – lige indtil han møder en ung romerinde, som han herefter tilbringer alle nætterne med. Inspireret af denne kærlighedsaffære folder skønheden ved hele oldtidens poesi og billedkunst sig ud for digteren; netop ved at følge formerne på den elskedes bryst forstår han marmorets skønhed!

I Elegi nr. 1 har digteren endnu ikke mødt sin elskerinde. Den døde by virker tom og dyster, han fornemmer at noget skjuler sig for ham. Det afspejler sig i musikken gennem “tomme” akkorder og mol-prægede klange. Solocelloen antyder dog tilstedeværelsen af noget varmbloedigt; den står – som Goethe – alene blandt de nærmest udmejslede søjler af vokale klange.

I Elegi nr. 5 dvæler digteren ved sin lykke: Om dagen fordyber han sig i antikkens kunstskatte, om natten fordyber han sig i erotikken. Jeg’et har nu fået stemme i form af en bariton-solist, som celloen med de kvindelige former smyer sig kælent omkring. Det 8-stemmige kor danner sammen med solocelloen en næsten orkestral baggrund for jeg’ets fortløbende fortælling. Koret lægger et douce skær – den romerske varmedis? – hen over den ellers saftige og varmbloedige fortælling.

Dominus regit (2005) blev skrevet til et hæfte med en række danske komponisters udsættelse af Salme 23 fra Det Gamle Testamente, Dominus regit: “Herren er min hyrde, mig skal intet fattes”. Teksten udtrykker stor fortrøstning og en dyb taknemmelighed over blot at være i live og nyde tilværelsen som den er.

Holten trækker på sin dybe indsigt i renæssancens musik. Satsen begynder polyfont med et kunsthærdigt væv af stemmer, der krydser ind over hinanden. Efterhånden følges stemmerne mere ad, som i en madrigal. Gennem hele satsen lægger musikken sig tæt op ad teksten, og med forløbet fra det polyfone til det homofone er det som om fokus til

sidst koncentrerer om det afsluttende udsagn: “Kun godhed og miskundhed følger mig alle mine dage, og i Herrens hus skal jeg bo gennem lange tider”.

Netop med en bibeltekst er det oplagt at benytte sig af den tidlige musiks kompositionsteknikker. Her går det ikke at udpensle musikken som i de romerske elegier, det ville blive alt for specifikt og personligt; bibelteksterne kræver en vis distance og et mere tilbageholdent udtryk. Harmonikken er dog i høj grad nutidig, her lægger Holten sig i kølvandet på komponister som Francis Poulenc og Bernhard Lewkovitch, der også fandt inspiration i den tidlige musik men gav den et nutidigt harmonisk udtryk.

Gustav Mahler: Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen (Holten, 2010) er et arrangement for barytonsolist og 8-stemmigt kor af en af Mahlers Rückert-lieder. Der findes allerede et ofte opført arrangement for 16-stemmigt kor af Clytus Gottwald, som Holten selv har dirigeret nogle gange. Men Holten synes ikke rigtig, at Gottwald forløser Mahlers stykke, bl.a. savner han en solist, der kan udtrykke det “Ich”, der er så centralt i teksten.

Holten tager udgangspunkt i Mahlers klaversats men med Mahlers egen, sublime orkestersats dybt indlejret i baghovedet. Koret fungerer således som (orkester)akkompagnement for solisten. Holten har anstrengt sig for at lægge sig så tæt op ad forlægget som muligt, inden for rammerne af, hvad der rent faktisk *kan* synges af et kor. Og han har stræbt efter udelukkende at fungere som arrangør og så vidt muligt undgå at blande sin egen personlighed med Mahlers.

Cantigas d'amigo (2010) blev til på opfordring fra Skt. Annæ Pigeor. Bo Holten overvejede længe hvilke tekster der kunne egne sig for disse helt unge piger, som står der i deres blomstrende pubertet. Rent tilfældigt faldt han over en stor samling af portugisiske middelalderdigte, endda med en udmærket engelsk oversættelse. Der var en mode i Portugal i 12-1300-tallet, hvor mandlige digtere skrev som om de var unge piger; ungpigedømme om unge drenge og mænd, der var ude på søen eller i krig eller på anden vis uopnåelige.

Holten har valgt 5 tekster som i indhold og musikalitet lægger op til forskellige tempi og forskellige stemninger. Teksterne er i deres grundstruktur meget repetitive, og det af-

spejler sig i en musik, der trækker på inspiration fra middelalder (drone-toner, kanon og ekko-effekter) og fra amerikansk minimalisme (motiver der kører i ring og forskyder sig minimalt).

Men først og fremmest udnytter Bo Holten den delikatesse, der er i et pigekor; de kan få akkorder til at klinge fantastisk, og de har en lidt uskyldig klang samtidig med at den er yppig og sensuel.

Handel with Care (Variations on Darwin) (2009) Bo Holten blev bedt om at lave nogle variationer over en sats fra Händels Watermusic i anledning af Händel-året 2009 (250 års dødsdag). Men 2009 var også et Darwin-år (200 års fødsel og 150-året for “Om arternes oprindelse”), og da Holten med egne ord er en benhård darwinist, fik han lyst til også at inddrage Darwin i dette jubilæums-stykke.

I anledning af Darwin-året havde Holten bl.a. læst Darwins erindringer. Her er et afsnit, hvor Darwin imponerende kort og ydmygt fortæller hvordan han fik ideen til sin evolutionsteori. Dette korte tekststykke lader Holten nu alterne og herrerne synge – eller måske snarere: recitere; de lægger blot en harmonisk bund i form af en akkordrundgang og har næsten ingen melodiske bevægelser. Darwins dybt revolutionerende teori bliver her messet frem, som var det en katolsk trosbekendelse.

Efterhånden kommer de tre-delte sopranner ind over med de smukkeste melodier i form af det ene lille Händel-citat efter det andet i både tekst og melodi, bl.a. fra Messias (I know that my Redeemer liveth), Rinaldo (Lascia ch'io pianga) og Watermusic. Sopranstemmerne er sine steder ganske krævende, der er også lidt showpiece over det. Med denne lille musikalske spøg får Holten på én gang markeret to jubilæer, der ellers intet har med hinanden at gøre.

Rota Veneris (2008) Efter færdiggørelsen af helaftensoperaen “Livlægens besøg” var Holten fuldstændig tømt for ideer til nye kompositioner. For dog at begynde et sted tog han fat i nogle anonyme motetter fra 1300-tallet og besluttede sig for at komponere videre på dem. Den originale tekst blev erstattet af andre middelaldertekster, der fortæller om vidt

forskellige sider af kærlighedslivet. Rota Veneris, Venus' hjul, er et begreb fra middelalderen, der beskriver hvordan alting i kærligheden hele tiden går op og ned.

De originale satser er 2- og 3-stemmige. Bo Holten har i forskelligt omfang tilføjet nye stemmer, mest enkelt i Aprili tempore, hvor der blot er lagt en overstemme i form af en sopransolist ind over den originale sats. I solisten møder vi den unge pige, der så tragisk kun kan se sin elskede i drømme; der er stor dramatik i den ekspressive solostemme over den bagvedliggende middelaldersats.

I Quia sub umbraculum handler det om den ophøjede kærlighed, hvor skønjomfuen tålmodigt sidder og venter på sin ridder, den eneste ene. Her har Holten foldet det 3-stemmige forlæg ud i en pompøs 6-stemmig madrigalagtig sats; mens han i den sidste, nonnens klagesang, har lavet en virtuos dansesats med stemmer, der hele tiden forsøger at overdøve hinanden, hvorved han får understreget det komiske i teksten.

Klaus Møller-Jørgensen er musikjournalist, freelance programmedarbejder i DR og arbejder desuden som informationsmedarbejder på Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium.

Elegie I

(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

- [1] Saget, Steine, mir an, o sprecht, ihr hohen Paläste!
Straßen, redet ein Wort! Genius, regst du dich nicht?
Ja, es ist alles beseelt in deinen heiligen Mauern,
Ewige Roma; nur mir schweiget noch alles so still.
O wer flüstert mir zu, an welchem Fenster erblick ich
Einst das holde Geschöpf, das mich versengend erquickt?
Ahn ich die Wege noch nicht, durch die ich immer und immer
Zu ihr und von ihr zu gehn, opfre die köstliche Zeit?
Noch betracht ich Kirch und Palast, Ruinen und Säulen,
Wie ein bedächtiger Mann schicklich die Reise benutzt.
Doch bald ist es vorbei: dann wird ein einziger Tempel
Amors Tempel nur sein, der den Geweihten empfängt.
Eine Welt zwar bist du, o Rom; doch ohne die Liebe
Wäre die Welt nicht die Welt, wäre denn Rom auch nicht Rom.

Elegie V

(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

- [2] Froh empfind ich mich nun auf klassischem Boden begeistert,
Vor- und Mitwelt spricht lauter und reizender mir.
Hier befolg ich den Rat, durchblättere die Werke der Alten
Mit geschäftiger Hand, täglich mit neuem Genuß.
Aber die Nächte hindurch hält Amor mich anders beschäftigt;
Werd ich auch halb nur gelehrt, bin ich doch doppelt beglückt.
Und belehre ich mich nicht, indem ich des lieblichen Busens
Formen spähe, die Hand leite die Hüften hinab?
Dann versteh ich den Marmor erst recht: ich denk und vergleiche,
Sehe mit fühlendem Aug, fühle mit sehender Hand.
Raubt die Liebste denn gleich mir einige Stunden des Tages,
Gibt sie Stunden der Nacht mir zur Entschädigung hin.
Wird doch nicht immer geküßt, es wird vernünftig gesprochen,
Überfällt sie der Schlaf, lieg ich und denke mir viel.
Oftmals hab ich auch schon in ihren Armen gedichtet
Und des Hexameters Maß leise mit fingernder Hand
Ihr auf den Rücken gezählt. Sie atmet in lieblichem Schlummer,
Und es durchglüheth ihr Hauch mir bis ins Tiefste die Brust.
Amor schüret die Lamp' indes und gedenket der Zeiten,
Da er den nämlichen Dienst seinen Triumvirn getan.

Elegy I

(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

Tell me you stones, O speak, you towering palaces!
Streets, say a word! Spirit of this place, are you dumb?
All things are alive in your sacred walls
Eternal Rome, it's only for me all is still.
Who'll whisper to me, at what window
Will I see the sweet thing who'll kindle me now, and quicken?
Already I guess the ways, walking to her and from her,
Ever and always I'll go, while sweet time slips by.
I'm gazing at church and palace, ruin and column,
Like a serious man making sensible use of a journey,
But soon it will happen, and all will be one vast temple,
Love's temple, receiving its new initiate.
Though you're a whole world, Rome, still, without Love,
The world isn't the world, and Rome can't be Rome.

Elegy V

(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

I feel I'm happily inspired now on Classical soil:
The Past and Present speak louder, more charmingly.
Here, as advised, I leaf through the works of the Ancients
With busy hands, and, each day, with fresh delight.
But at night Love keeps me busy another way:
I become half a scholar but twice as contented.
And am I not learning, studying the shape
Of her lovely breasts: her hips guiding my hand?
Then I know marble more: thinking, comparing,
See with a feeling eye: feel with a seeing hand.
If my darling is stealing the day's hours from me,
She gives me hours of night in compensation.
We're not always kissing: we often talk sense:
When she's asleep, I lie there filled with thought.
Often I've even made poetry there in her arms,
Counted hexameters gently there on my fingers
Over her body. She breathes in sweetest sleep,
And her breath burns down to my deepest heart.
Amor trims the lamp then and thinks of the times
When he did the same for his three poets of love.

Dominus regit me

(Psalm 23)

- [3] Dominus regit me et nihil mihi deerit:
in loco pascuæ ibi me collocavit super aquam
refectionis educavit me
animam meam convertit deduxit me
super semitas justitiæ propter nomen suum.
Nam etsi ambulavero in medio umbræ mortis
non timebo mala quoniam tu mecum es.
Virga tua et baculus tuus ipsa me consolata sunt.
Parasti in conspectu meo mensam adversus eos
qui tribulant me; impinguasti in oleo caput meum:
et calix meus inebrians, quam præclarus est
Et misericordia tua subsequetur me omnibus
diebus vitæ meæ; et ut inhabitem in domo
Domini in longitudinem dierum.

Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen

(Friedrich Rückert)

- [4] Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen,
Mit der ich sonst viele Zeit verdorben,
Sie hat so lange nichts von mir vernommen,
Sie mag wohl glauben, ich sei gestorben.

Es ist mir auch gar nichts daran gelegen,
Ob sie mich für gestorben hält,
Ich kann auch gar nichts sagen dagegen,
Denn wirklich bin ich gestorben der Welt.

Ich bin gestorben dem Weltgetümmel,
Und ruh' in einem stillen Gebiet.
Ich leb' allein in meinem Himmel,
In meinem Lieben, in meinem Lied.

The Lord is my shepherd

(Psalm 23)

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me;
Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:
Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

I am lost to the world

(Friedrich Rückert, transl. Richard Stokes)

I am lost to the world
With which I used to waste much time,
It has for so long known nothing of me,
It may well believe that I am dead.

Nor am I at all concerned
If it should think that I am dead.
Nor can I deny it,
For truly I am dead to the world.

I am dead to the world's tumult
And rest in a quiet realm!
I live alone in my heaven,
In my love, in my song!

Cantigas d'amigo

*5 love lyrics of medieval Portugal
(transl. Barbara Hughes Fowler)*

No. 1 How very great my grief

- [5] How very great my grief in suffering
How very great my grief for the love of a friend
whom I do not see
I shall wait beneath the hazel tree

How very great my grief in what I endure
for love of a friend and not to speak with him
But I shall wait beneath the hazel tree
For love for a friend whom I do not see
and dare not speak to him my suffering

But I shall wait beneath the hazel tree
and dare not tell to him my suffering
nor may I linger because of my love for him
But I shall wait beneath the hazel tree
(Nuno Fernandez Torneol)

No. 2 In the green grasses

- [6] In the green grasses I saw the wandering does, my friend
In the green meadows I saw the stalwart stags, my friend
delighted with the does, I washed my locks, my friend
delighted with the stags, I washed my hair, my friend

After I washed my locks, I bound them with gold, my friend
After I washed my hair, I bound it with gold
with gold I bound it and waited for you, my friend
with gold I bound them and waited for you, my friend
(Medieval Portuguese)

No. 3 ... To see my friend there

- [7] I thought in my heart I'd make a pilgrimage to Santiago one day
to offer a prayer and to see my friend there

If the weather's fine and my mother does not go
I want to travel, travel happy and looking my best
looking my very best and to see my friend there

I'll try very soon to burn my candles
with the awful longing I have
and to see my friend there
(Medieval Portuguese)

No. 4 Lelia doura

- [8] I, the lovely one did not sleep, leila doura
But my friend was wont to come to me
edoi lelia doura

My friend was wont to come to me
and he'd sing so beautifully of love
edoi lelia doura

I ardently desired my friend,
my friend that would be together with me
edoi lelia doura
(Pedro Eanes Solaz)

No. 5 ... Prepare to go

- [9] Prepare to go, I am going to the dance
going to the dance of love
I'm going to the ball of love
Prepare to go, I am going to the ball
that's happening in the house of love

His for whom I have dearly longed they'll summon me to the oath of love
His whom I've much desired they'll summon me bedecked with love
Hasten now, my friend, with gold I bound it and I waited for you, my friend
Prepare to hasten now, my friend, prepare to go
(Dona Dinis)

Handel with Care (Variations on Darwin)

(From Charles Darwin's autobiography; Giacomo Rossi *, Charles Jennens **)

CHOIR

- [10] In October 1838, that is, fifteen months after I had begun my systematic enquiry, I happened to read for amusement Malthus on Population, and being well prepared to appreciate the struggle for existence which everywhere goes on from long-continued observation of the habits of animals and plants, it at once struck me that under these circumstances favourable variations would tend to be preserved, and unfavourable ones to be destroyed.

SOPRANOS

Lascia ch'io pianga la dura sorte,
E che sospiri la libertà

Il duol infranga queste ritorte,
De' miei martiri sol per pietà. *

SOPRANO SOLO 1

Ah ...
I know that my Redeemer, and he shall purify.

SOPRANO SOLO 2

Ah ...
He shall gather the lambs with his arm
Behold the lamb of God that taketh away.
Rejoice, rejoice. **

CHOIR

The results of this would be the formation of a new species. Here, then, I had at last got a theory by which to work. But I was so anxious to avoid prejudice, that I determined not for some time to write even the briefest sketch of it. In June 1842 I first allowed myself the satisfaction of writing a very brief abstract of my theory in pencil in 35 pages; and this was enlarged during the summer of 1844 into one of 230 pages.

CHOIR AND SOPRANO SOLOISTS

Ah ...

CHOIR

230 pages which I had fairly copied out and still possess.

Rota Veneris

3 gothic love songs

Quia sub umbraculum

- [11] Quia sub umbraculum
sedi, quem desidero
amoris signaculo
dilectissimus, quem video,
cor meum sic consignat
ut generosa dignat.

Surgat, ad me veniat,
preelectus milium,
amplexu me leniat,
pudoris sumens lylum quod illi soli servo,
sub castitatis modo.

(Latin anon. 12th century)

Aprili tempore

- [12] Aprili tempore quod nuper transiit
fidelis imago coram me adstitit,
me vocans dulciter pauxillum tetigit;
oppressa lacrimis vox eius deficit,
suspirans etenim loqui non valuit.

Illius a tactu nimis intremui,
velud exterrita sursum insilui,
extensis brachiis corpus applicui,
exsanguis penitus tota derigui –
Evanuit enim! nihil retinui!

Sopore libera exclamo fortiter:
'Quo fugis, amabo? Cur tam celeriter?
Siste gradum, si vis inibo pariter,
nam tecum vivere volo perhenniter!'

Rota Veneris

3 gothic love songs (transl. Peter Dronke)

Because I sat beneath the shade

Because I sat beneath the shade,
he, whom I longed for,
my beloved,
whom I behold,
seals my heart with the seal of love
in such a way that it cherishes noble virtues.

May he rise and come to me,
he who is unique in thousands,
caressing me with his embrace,
taking the lily of innocence
which I save for him alone, incorruptible

It was in April

It was in the April which has just passed –
the image of my true love stood before me.
Softly calling me, he touched me gently.
His voice failed, overcome by tears;
he gave such sighs, he could not speak.

At his touch I trembled fearfully, I leapt up as if in fright,
held out my arms and pressed my body to his.
Utterly drained of blood I froze – for he had vanished!
I was holding nothing!

Fully awake, I cried out loud: 'Where are you fleeing to,
I beg you tell me, why so swiftly fleeing?
Stay, or if you will, I too shall enter,
for I want to live with you forever.'
Soon I rued that I had spoken in this way.

Mox me penituit dixisse taliter.
Aperte fuerant fenestre solii,
fulgebant pulcriter Diane radii –
Heu me, heu miseram! tam diu dolui,
fluxerunt per genas ploratus rivuli;
donec in crastinum nunquam abstinui.
(*Latin anon. 11th century*)

Plangit nonna

¹³ Plangit nonna, fletibus inenarrabilibus,
condolens gemitibus – dicens consocialibus:
Heu misella!

Nihil est deterius tali vita!
Cum enim sim petulans et lasciva,

Sono tintinnabulum, repeto psalterium,
gratum linquo somnium cum dormire cuperem,
Heu misella!

Pernoctando vigilo cum non vellem;
juvenem amplecterer quam libenter!

Manus dans, in cordibus rumpo pectus,
linguam tero dentibus verba promens.

Fibula non perfruo, flammeum non capio,
strophium assumerem, diadema cuperem, heu misella!
Monile arriperem si valerem, pelles et herminie libet ferre.

Lectus est in pissinis, filtris non tappetibus,
cervical durissimum, subter filtrum palea, heu misella!
Vescor lance misera et amara, e succis farinule et caseo.

Juvenis, ne moreris! Faciam quod precipis: Dormi mecum!
Si non vis, tedet plura dicere, heu misella!
atque magis facere, perdens vitam
Cum possim erueri memet ipsam.
(*Latin anon. ca. 1100*)

The terrace windows were open.
Diana's beams shone in all their beauty,
while I in my wretchedness grieved,
ah so long. Streams of tears
flowed over my cheeks –
till the next day my weeping never ceased.

A nun is lamenting

A nun is lamenting with unutterable tears and moans,
grieving deeply on behalf of her companions:
Woe is me,

nothing is more degrading than such a life!
For, though I am made for love and play,

I have to ring the chapel-bell, to chant the psalter over and over,
to leave my dear dreams when I long to sleep –
woe is me –

and stay awake all night against my will.
How gladly I would fly into a lover's arms!

giving in, my heart bursts with grief,
but as the words come out I bite my tongue.

I have no brooch to enjoy, can wear no bridal-veil;
how I'd long to put on a chaplet or tiara, woe is me –
I'd get hold of a necklace if I could – and what joy to wear ermine furs!

My bed is in a pitchy place, with felt, not coverlets;
the pillow very hard, under the bedding – straw, woe is me –
I eat the wretched, bitter fare, tasting of a little flour and cheese.

Young man, please don't delay! I'll do your bidding; sleep with me!
If you don't want to, there's no more to say, woe is me!
and no more to do, wasting my life –
since I can still destroy myself.

THE FLEMISH RADIO CHOIR was founded in 1937 as a professional chamber choir by the Belgian public broadcaster of the day. Today, the Flemish Radio Choir has grown into a high-quality ensemble of 24 singers that is attracting attention both at home and abroad. The choir is under the leadership of Hervé Niquet who, in 2011, took over as chief conductor after Bo Holten. The Flemish Radio Choir has a strong dedication to the a cappella repertoire and in addition collaborates on specific projects with renowned instrumental ensembles from both Belgium and abroad, such as the Brussels Philharmonic, the Brussels Jazz Orchestra and the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra. The Flemish Radio Choir has gained international recognition through its CD recordings for the Glossa label, devoted to the great chamber choir repertoire. Nearly all of the choir's concerts are recorded by the Flemish classical music radio station, Klara, and hence the choir has built up a unique collection of recordings, including works by Flemish composers.
www.vlaamsradiokoer.be

BO HOLTEN (b. 1948) is equally recognized as a conductor and a composer. In 1979 he founded Ars Nova Copenhagen which he conducted until 1996, when he founded the vocal ensemble Musica Ficta. From 1990 to 2005 he was the principal guest conductor of the BBC Singers, and in 2008-11 he was chief conductor of the Flemish Radio Choir in Brussels. His work with Danish orchestras is constantly on the increase and has earned him praise for recorded interpretations of music by Carl Nielsen, Frederick Delius, Thomas Koppel, Emil Hartmann, Knudåge Riisager and Emil Reesen. As a composer Holten has produced no fewer than seven operas, five solo concertos, two symphonies, various orchestral and chamber works, film music and some 45 choral pieces. In 2002 Dacapo issued a CD with a selection of his music for voices a cappella sung by the BBC Singers. In the spring of 2009 Holten had a major success at the Royal Danish Theatre in Copenhagen with his latest opera *The Visit of the Royal Physician*, which he conducted himself, and which is available on DVD from Dacapo.

DET FLAMSKE RADIOKOR blev grundlagt i 1937 som et professionelt kammerkor af den belgiske statsradiofoni på den tid. I dag er Det Flamske Radiokor et højkvalitetsensemble med 24 sangere, som tiltrækker opmærksomhed både hjemme og internationalt. Koret ledes af Hervé Niquet, som i 2011 overtog posten som chefdirigent fra Bo Holten. Det Flamske Radiokor er stærkt dedikeret til a cappella repertoiret, men samarbejder også på projekter med anerkendte instrumentale ensembler både i og udenfor Belgien, såsom Bruxelles Filharmonikerne, Brussels Jazz Orchestra og Rotterdam Filharmonikerne. Det Flamske Radiokor har høstet international anerkendelse for sine CD-indspilninger med fokus på det store kammerkor-repertoire, indspillet for plademærket Glossa. Stort set alle korets koncerter bliver optaget af den flamske klassiske radiostation, Klara, hvorved koret har opbygget en unik samling af optagelser, herunder værker af flamske komponister.
www.vlaamsradiokoer.be

BO HOLTEN (f. 1948) er lige anerkendt som dirigent og komponist. Han stiftede i 1979 Ars Nova Copenhagen, som han dirigerede frem til 1996, hvor han dannede vokalensemblet Musica Ficta. Han var første gæstedirigent for The BBC Singers fra 1990-2005 og var 2008-11 chefdirigent for Det Flamske Radiokor i Bruxelles. Bo Holtens orkesterarbejde i Danmark bliver stadig mere omfattende med roste indspilninger af Carl Nielsen, Frederick Delius, Thomas Koppel, Emil Hartmann, Knudåge Riisager og Emil Reesen. Som komponist står Bo Holten for hele syv operaer, fem solokoncerter, to symfonier, diverse orkesterværker og kammermusik, filmmusik samt ca. 45 værker for kor. I 2002 udgav Dacapo en cd med et udvalg af Bo Holtens værker for kor a cappella, sunget af The BBC Singers. Bo Holten havde i foråret 2009 stor succes på Den Kgl. Opera i København med sin opera *Livlægens besøg*, som han selv dirigerede, og som Dacapo har udgivet på DVD.

FLEMISH RADIO CHOIR

SOPRANOS

Karen Lemaire – solo [6]
 Hildegardie Van Ovestraeten
 Hilde Venken – solo [1] [4] [6] [10] [12]
 Eva Goudie-Falckenbach
 Sarah Van Mol – solo [1] [6] [10]
 Emilie De Voght – solo [4] [6]
 Joke Cromheecke

TENORS

Ivan Goossens
 Paul Schils
 Gunter Claessens
 Paul Foubert
 Michiel Haspeslagh
 Henk Pringels

ALTOS

Marianne Byloo
 Marleen Delputte
 Saartje Raman
 Tin Siegers
 Marion Kreike
 Ann Janssens

BASSES

Philippe Souvagio
 Joris Derder – solo [2]
 Jan van der Crabben
 Lieven Deroo
 Paul Mertens
 Marc Meersman

With the support of
 the Flemish authorities



The Flemish Radio Choir is an institution of the Flemish Community.



THE FLEMISH RADIO CHOIR



BO HOLTEN

DDD

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Dacapo Records, Denmark's national record label, was founded in 1986 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.

