

RUED LANGGAARD  
String Quartets Vol. 1.  
Nightingale String Quartet



11720



# RUED LANGGAARD

## String Quartets Vol. 1.

### Nightingale String Quartet

Josefine Dalsgaard, violin (1st in nos. 2 and 6)  
 Gunvor Sihm, violin (1st in no. 3 and Variations)  
 Marie Louise Broholt Jensen, viola  
 Louisa Schwab, cello

- STRING QUARTET NO. 2 BVN 145 (1918, rev. 1931)..... 25:10
- [1] I Bortdragende Stormskyer (Storm Clouds Receding):  
 Allegro focoso – Allegro ma non troppo – Allegro focoso –  
 Agitato – Più mosso – Poco lento – Allegro ma non troppo –  
 Allegro focoso – Grave – Poco a poco adagio ..... 8:36
- [2] II Bortkørende Tog (Train Passing By):  
 Poco moderato – Presto – Poco moderato – Presto impetuoso ..... 2:18
- [3] III Skumrende Landskab (Landscape in Twilight):  
 Andante pastorale – Con poco moto – Fiero alla zingaresa –  
 Andante pastorale – Con poco moto – Andante ..... 6:19

- [4] IV Vandring (The Walk):  
 Poco lento elegiaco – Poco allegro alla marzia risoluto –  
 Poco lento sostenuto – Poco allegro alla marzia risoluto –  
 Poco lento – Alla marzia risoluto energico – Allegro scherzoso –  
 Poco lento – Alla marzia – Con poco gravità..... 7:58

STRING QUARTET NO. 3 BVN 183 (1924) ..... 14:46

- [5] I Poco allegro rapinoso (Rovbegærligt / Rapacious) – Quasi staccamento –  
 Furioso – Agitato..... 7:30
- [6] II Presto scherzoso artificioso (Underfundigt / Artful) – Più animato  
 quasi non scarpino – Furioso mortifero – Pesante collerico ..... 1:41
- [7] III Tranquillo – Scherzoso schernevole (Spodsk / Scoffing) – Furioso –  
 Tranquillo – Mosso frenetico – Tranquillo – Mosso frenetico –  
 Fiero, stringendo – Maestoso ..... 5:36

STRING QUARTET NO. 6 IN ONE MOVEMENT BVN 160 (1918-19) ..... 15:07

- [8] Poco tranquillo – Poco vivace – Poco tranquillo – Poco con moto – Con moto –  
 Vivace scherzando – Poco tranquillo – Agitato orribilmente – Tranquillo –  
 Lento – Andante tranquillo – Poco animato – Più allargando – Tranquillo –  
 Burlesco rustico – Appassionata – Con più moto, appassionata – Impetuoso fiera-  
 mente – Poco a poco tranquillo – Lento – Semplice, non mosso (Swedish Folk Tune)

# VARIATIONS ON "MIG HJERTELIG NU LÆNGES"

(OH, SACRED HEAD! NOW WOUNDED) BVN 71 (1914; 1931) ..... 15:24

Chamber music for 2 violins, 1 viola and 1 cello

|    |                                                                       |      |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 9  | Introduction: Solenne sostenuto, lento .....                          | 1:25 |
| 10 | Var. I: Andante sostenuto.....                                        | 1:21 |
| 11 | Var. II: Poco lento sempre tranquillo.....                            | 1:37 |
| 12 | Var. III: Lento .....                                                 | 1:31 |
| 13 | Var. IV: Andante sostenuto – Lento – Andante sostenuto.....           | 2:23 |
| 14 | Var. V: Poco allegro tranquillo .....                                 | 2:07 |
| 15 | Var. VI: Tranquillo sospirando.....                                   | 2:38 |
| 16 | Var. VII: Poco allegro maestoso – Allegro fiero – Più tranquillo..... | 2:22 |

Total 70:27

# RUED LANGGAARD by Bendt Viinholt Nielsen

RUED LANGGAARD is an outsider in Danish music. His Late Romantic and Symbolist background and his passionate views on art and the role of the artist brought him into conflict with the sober, anti-Romantic view of art that reigned supreme in Denmark in the 1920s and 1930s. Langgaard did not shrink from the visionary and experimental, the eccentric and extreme, and his music ventured into areas where the outlooks, musical styles and qualitative norms of the twentieth century clash.

Rued Langgaard was born in 1893, the son of a highly respected Copenhagen piano teacher, Siegfried Langgaard, who was also active as a composer and was greatly preoccupied with musical/philosophical speculations along Theosophical lines. Langgaard's mother was a pianist too, and he had his basic musical education from his parents. In 1905, at the age of 11, he made his debut as an organ improviser in Copenhagen, and when he was 14 his first major orchestral and choral work was performed. But the young composer got off to a bad start, since the reviewers gave it the thumbs-down; and in fact Langgaard never succeeded in being properly accepted either by the press or by the musical powers-that-be in Denmark.

So in 1911, when Rued Langgaard had completed his hour-long First Symphony, it proved impossible to have the work performed in Denmark. Langgaard had been on several study trips to Berlin, accompanied by his parents, and the Langgaard family's contacts with conductors like Arthur Nikisch and Max Fiedler led to a world premiere of the symphony in 1913 in Berlin by the Berlin Philharmonic conducted by Max Fiedler. Yet the overwhelming success enjoyed on this occasion by the 19-year-old composer did not result in a performance of the symphony in Denmark, and the outbreak of the Great War in 1914 made it impossible for Langgaard to follow up his success in Germany itself.

The scepticism of the Danish musical establishment towards Langgaard meant that he had difficulty getting his compositions performed, and had to organize his own concerts to present his music. The expansive artistic development he experienced in the 1910s therefore went unnoticed by both critics and audiences. Important experimental works like *Sinfonia interna* (1915-16), *Sfærernes musik* (The Music of the Spheres)

(1916-18), Symphony No. 6 (1919-20) and the opera *Antikrist* (1921-23) were either not performed or not understood in Denmark.

In his native country Rued Langgaard was alone in striving for a visionary musical idiom as a continuation of the Romantic tradition with a Symbolist basis of the kind one finds in the works of Scriabin. The tendency in Denmark was towards a questioning of the whole Late Romantic spirit, and Langgaard had to go to Germany – at the beginning of the 1920s – to experience successful performances of his symphonies. Yet there was no question of any widespread or general interest in Langgaard in the south, and the performances soon ebbed out.

The years around 1924/25 marked a major turning point in Langgaard's life and music. After many years of openness and responsiveness to currents in the most recent music – not least in Carl Nielsen's progressive works – Langgaard changed tack and turned to a Romantic, pastiche-like style with Niels W. Gade and Wagner as his exemplars. He indicated that he felt betrayed by the age and by the musical establishment, and he hit out at Carl Nielsen, who in his view had a status that was far too guru-like. The result was that Langgaard was now given the cold shoulder in earnest. After 1930, concert performances of his works became rare indeed (they were however given quite a few radio broadcasts, especially in the 1940s). He was unable to find a job as a church organist, although he applied for innumerable posts all over the country. He did not succeed until 1940, at the age of 47, when he was given the position as organist at the cathedral in Ribe in South Jutland. In Ribe Langgaard's music entered a new phase in which the defiant, the jagged and the absurd became more prominent.

After Langgaard's death in 1952 his name seemed threatened by oblivion; but in the 1960s the renewed interest in 'neglected' Late Romantics shed new light on Langgaard: it was discovered that although Langgaard had fundamentally been a conservative composer, there were features in his music that strangely prefigured the static music, collage music and minimalism of the 1960s and 1970s.

Today innumerable of his 431 compositions have been recorded, his output and life have been recorded in book form, and his works, most of which remained unprinted, are being published.

## RUED LANGGAARD'S STRING QUARTETS

Rued Langgaard's contributions to the string quartet genre were mainly written within an interval of just eleven years, from 1914 until 1925. In this period he composed eight quartets, four of which were created in the course of only twelve months (1918-19). The works were thus written in the composer's productive and extremely expansive youthful years, when he also created major works like Symphonies 4 and 6, *The Music of the Spheres* and the opera *Antichrist*. In the next phase, from 1925 until 1940, when his composing almost came to a halt, he took several of the eight quartet works up for revision and reworking, and thus new versions saw the light of day. However, no entirely new contributions to the genre came from Langgaard's pen, except for two small pieces written around 1950: on the one hand a small piece that has disappeared today, written in memory of the composer Niels W. Gade, and on the other an ultra-short *Italian Scherzo*.

The catalogue of his works lists ten known, independent compositions by Langgaard for string quartet. The composer's typical way of working, characterized as it was by 'recycling' and repeated revisions, has meant that whole movements and certain themes recur in different works. Further confusion is created by Langgaard's own numbering of the string quartets in the 1930s, which does not include all the works, nor does it correspond to the order of their creation. The following list gives a chronological overview:

### String Quartet no. 1 (BVN 68)

E major, 4 movements. Composed in 1914-15, partly rejected but revised and reconstructed in 1936.

Fourth movement incorporated in reworked form as fourth movement in String Quartet no. 5.

### Variations on "Mig hjertelig nu længes" (BVN 71)

E major. Introduction and seven variations. Composed in 1914-15, revised and furnished with a new introduction in 1931/1940.

### String Quartet no. 2 (BVN 145)

D minor, 4 movements. Composed in 1918, revised in 1931.

Rosengårdsspil (Rosengård Play) (BVN 153)

E major, 4 movements. Composed in 1918.

First and fourth movements re-used in revised form as first and third movement in String Quartet no. 4.

String Quartet (A flat major) (BVN 155)

A flat major, 4 movements. Composed in 1918.

String Quartet no. 6 (BVN 160)

D minor, one movement. Composed in 1918-19.

String Quartet no. 3 (BVN 183)

3 movements. Composed in 1924.

String quartet no. 5 (BVN 189)

F major, 4 movements. Composed in 1925, revised in 1926-38.

The fourth movement is a reworked version of String Quartet no. 1, fourth movement.

String quartet no. 4 “Sommerdage” (Summer Days) (BVN 215)

F major, 3 movements. Composed in 1931 (on the basis of material from 1914-18).

The first and third movements are revised versions of the first and fourth movement of *Rosengårdsspil*; the second movement is based on String Quartet no. 1, second movement.

String quartet movement “Italian Scherzo” (BVN 408)

F major. Composed in 1950.

Rued Langgaard did not write his string quartet works for particular ensembles – with the exception of no. 3, which was composed for one of the best chamber ensembles in Denmark in the 1920s, the Breuning-Bache Quartet. String Quartet no. 3 is also the only one of the ten works that was published during the composer's lifetime, in 1931. The others have only been published after 1993, the last six as late as the present recording project

and under the auspices of the *Rued Langgaard Edition*. Three of the works on the list were not performed in Langgaard's time, and all in all there were only ten concert performances of these works in his lifetime. Quartet no. 3 was performed four times, the last time by the Gerhard Rafn Quartet during the festival Nordic Music Days in Oslo in 1934. In addition, in the 1930s and 1940s there were sporadic radio performances of nos. 2, 3 and 5. After this, interest in Langgaard's string quartets ebbed out. In 1972 the first recording of one of the quartets, no. 3, was released featuring the Copenhagen String Quartet, and a milestone was reached in 1984, when the Kontra Quartet recorded six of the works and made Langgaard's string quartets known in innumerable performances in Denmark and abroad.

The remarkable thing about Langgaard's music for string quartet is the wide stylistic spectrum covered by the works as a whole. They were written in the time of new departures between Late Romanticism and Modernism, and it is in fact a typical feature of the period that in his musical idiom Langgaard veers off now in the 'retro' direction, now in the avant-garde direction, but without abandoning the classical formal norms. In Langgaard's quartets we thus find Classicist, Romantic, Neoclassical, Expressionist and Modernist features – in short, the tonal idioms of the music span the whole scale from Mozart to Bartók. The Neoclassical tendency, which has no counterpart in Langgaard's symphonies, makes its impact in the movement *Mozart* (of *Rosengårdsspil*), and colours the string quartet in A flat major throughout; the latter is almost a pastiche of Vienna Classicism. At the other extreme we find String Quartet no. 3, which with its aggressively Expressionist tonal idiom represents the wildest avant-garde in Danish music in 1924. One characteristic feature of the quartets, unlike Langgaard's symphonic music, is that among the total of 29 movements we find both decided (and humorous) scherzo movements and some of the weightiest slow movements Langgaard wrote.

Several of the works have a quite special inspiration. In 1913 the 20-year-old Langgaard was on holiday in Sweden, in the small spa town of Kyrkhult in Blekinge, where he lodged (with his parents) in a property called “Rosengården” (the Rose Garden). His stay there was to assume a lifelong significance for Langgaard, first and foremost, we are led to believe, because he had fallen in love with a girl called Dora (her identity otherwise is unknown to this day). At Rosengården Langgaard wrote some love songs to texts by

Goethe, and five years later these songs and mood evocations from that summer formed the inspirational basis for a whole three string quartets. At first all three of these works were given the title *Rosengårdsspil* (Rosengård Play), but later their titles were changed (one quartet, however, has been published in its original form under the title *Rosengårdsspil*, while the same piece in a reworked form is called String Quartet no. 4; the other two are String Quartet in A flat major and String Quartet no. 6). Quartet no. 1 is also related to Rosengården and at one point was called *Rosengårdsspil*. The scherzo movement is based on the Goethe song *Gleich und gleich*, which is about the little bird and the little bee! Motifs from this song recur in *Rosengårdsspil* (1st movement) and String Quartet no. 4 (1st and 2nd movements). Another leitmotif with references to Rosengården appears at the beginning of the final movement of String Quartet no. 1 and reappears in both *Rosengårdsspil* and String Quartet no. 4. Five of the quartets are thus part of a complex of works with the summer of 1913 as a shared source of inspiration. And clearly it is no coincidence that String Quartet no. 6 quotes the Swedish folk song “Och hör du unga Dora vill du gifta dig i år” (Oh tell me now, young Dora, would you married be this year?)

#### STRING QUARTET NO. 2

The work was written in January-February 1918 and was given its first performance in a concert arranged by Langgaard himself at the Royal Academy of Music in Copenhagen in 1919. The boldness and aggression of the musical idiom did not go down well with the music critics, but the work must have made an impression in the progressive music milieu, for the quartet was performed again in 1922 at the Young Composers' Society, which promoted interest in contemporary music. In 1931 Langgaard revised the work, but only to a modest extent, and in this form it was performed on the radio in 1938 by the Gerhard Rafn Quartet. The original title was *Composition for Four String Instruments*, signalling the work's straightforward, 'modern' attitude. The first movement alternates between 'fiery' passages (*allegro focoso*), and passages of a contemplative character. The ending is dominated by the dissonant *tritonus* interval E flat – A, which also concludes the work as a whole. The second movement is 'futuristic machine music', with a train passing at full steam on screeching rails. This 'realistic' depiction of a locomotive was

composed five years before Honegger's famous orchestral work *Pacific 231*. The third movement was originally entitled *Landscape with a Fiddler*, like the title of a painting. The music pans over a landscape, and along the way we pass a fiddler who plays a *fiero alla zingaresa* solo, after which the landscape again comes into focus. The final movement has a composite character, but is welded together by a repeated, energetic *alla marcia risoluto* section. The title *Vandring* (The Walk) should perhaps be understood quite literally as a 'walking tour' where the 'march' is interrupted by varying views characterized for example by romantic and mysterious sounds.

#### STRING QUARTET NO. 3

In 1924 the Copenhagen-based Breuning-Bache Quartet planned a concert of music by young Danish composers, and in this connection approached Langgaard to ask if he had a suitable work 'in storage'. The approach inspired him to supply a brand new quartet, which was composed and fair-copied within a single week and given its first performance the same month (September 1924). Once more the music critics were entirely uncomprehending, but among Langgaard's colleagues a certain interest could be detected, and this led to the printing of the quartet in 1931. Richard Hove's review of the publication in *Dansk Musik Tidsskrift* was to be one of the most positive mentions ever accorded a work by Langgaard. Hove speaks of “the divine spark”, of “eruptions of a magical temperament” and of the work's “great internal power”. The work demonstrates the most wildly experimental musical language to be found in Danish music before Carl Nielsen's Sixth Symphony (1925). Like Nielsen (in the Sixth) Langgaard ironizes over modern music, but at the same time furnishes a solid defence of it. Langgaard's characterizations, for example *rapinoso* (rapacious), *artifizioso* (artful) and *schernevole* (scoffing), suggest his attitude to the dissonant and aggressive in the idiom. The contrast to this is the chorale that begins the last movement, and which attempts to make itself felt in the middle of the movement amidst the maelstrom of modern music – and in the end carries off the victory. The melody was written for B.S. Ingemann's hymn “Den store mester kommer” (The Great Master Comes), and a few years ago it was added as a four-part piece to the official chorale book of the Danish national church.

#### STRING QUARTET NO. 6

This one-movement quartet was composed in three days around New Year 1918/19 and given its first performance less than two months later in a concert arranged by Langgaard himself at the Royal Academy of Music in Copenhagen. In the programme the work is called *Rosengårdsspil (over en svensk Folkevis)* “Rosengård Play (on a Swedish folk song)”, and the composition is clearly inspired by the summer stay at Rosengården in Sweden in 1913. It has the sound of a piece of programme music, depicting in a free form episodes and moods experienced by the composer. Idyllic and melancholy passages alternate with scherzo-like elements in the first part of the movement, in which two recitative-like solo sections, first in the viola and later in the violin, quote a Swedish folk song of unrequited love, “Allt under himmelens fäste” (Beneath the vault of heaven). An expressive passage leads into a festive waltz in Swedish folk-fiddler style (*burlesco rustico*), and this is followed by the concluding part of the work, which is based on the Swedish folk song “Och hör du unga Dora vill du gifta dig i år” (Oh tell me now, young Dora, will you married be this year?), this too a song of unrequited love. After the first performance the work was laid aside by Langgaard, but he looked it out again in the 1940s and furnished it with the title String Quartet No. 6 in One Movement (the numbers 1-5 were already taken). The second performance took place on Danish radio in 1980.

#### VARIATIONS ON “MIG HJERTELIG NU LÆNGES”

The composition bears the subtitle *Chamber music for 2 violins, 1 viola and 1 cello*. The melody, best known in English as “O sacred Head! Now wounded” was composed by Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612), but is used in a later traditional chorale form. The quartet was composed in July 1914, but only fair-copied in the summer of 1915. It was put on the shelf, but resuscitated by Langgaard in 1940. The original introduction, which had evidently been lost, was now replaced by a new introduction in the form of a reworking of an organ prelude to “Mig hjertelig nu længes” which Langgaard had written for a funeral in 1931. The hymn tune is only heard in its entirety in Variation I (in the cello part), but the ending reappears in Variation VII (in the first violin part). The variations are one

of the composer's most purely classicist works, with reminiscences of Beethoven's late quartets. The composition was given its first performance in 1967.

#### NIGHTINGALE STRING QUARTET

The Nightingale String Quartet was founded in 2007 by violinists Gunvor Sihm and Josefine Dalsgaard, violist Marie Louise Broholt Jensen, and cellist Louisa Schwab. All four are currently studying for their masters' degrees at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen with Professor Tim Frederiksen as their chamber music mentor and coach. The Nightingale String Quartet was awarded the Danish Radio P2 talent prize 2010 “for – with burning passion, irresistible zest, and infectious mutual responsiveness – making the classical string quartet brim over with life, so that the music speaks directly and strongly to the newcomer as well as the experienced listener”. The Nightingale String Quartet has won prizes at several national as well as international chamber music competitions. In June 2008 the Quartet won 1st prize at the Royal Danish Academy of Music scholarship chamber music competition. After playing together for only a year and a half, the Quartet won 2nd prize at the Danish Radio chamber music competition in February 2009. This was to be the beginning of a long succession of concerts in chamber music societies all over Denmark. In April 2010 the Nightingale String Quartet was awarded 2nd prize at the international chamber music competition “Charles Hennen Concours” in Holland. As a result of this prize, the Nightingale String Quartet was invited to take part in the summer course “Orlando Festival” in Holland along with only 3 other prizewinning quartets. At the festival they received daily coachings from legendary violinist Shmuel Ashkenasi and played several concerts in the area. In 2011 the Quartet was awarded the Jacob Gade Major Scholarship and in 2011 the Léonie Sonning Music Foundation's Minor Music Prize.

The Nightingale String Quartet's name is inspired by Danish 'national author' Hans Christian Andersen's story about the nightingale.

[www.nightingalestringquartet.com](http://www.nightingalestringquartet.com)

RUED LANGGAARD er en outsider i dansk musik. Hans senromantiske og symbolistiske baggrund og hans patetiske syn på kunsten og kunstnerrollen bragte ham i konflikt med det nøgterne antiromantiske kunstsyn, der blev eneherskende i Danmark i mellemkrigs-tiden. Langgaard veg ikke tilbage for det visionært eksperimenterende, excentriske og ekstreme, og hans musik kom ud i områder, hvor det 20. århundredes livsanskuelser, musikalske stilretninger og kvalitetsnormer brydes.

Rued Langgaard fødtes 1893 som søn af en dengang anset københavnsk klaverpædagog, Siegfried Langgaard, der også var virksom som komponist og i øvrigt var stærkt optaget af musikfilosofiske grublerier ud fra en teosofisk overbevisning. Moderen var også pianist, og Rued Langgaard fik sin musikalske grunduddannelse af forældrene. Som 11-årig debuterede han i 1905 som orgelimprovisator i København, og da han var 14, opførtes hans første større orkester- og korværk. Men den unge komponist kom dårligt fra start, for anmelderne vendte tommelfingeren nedad, og faktisk lykkedes det aldrig for Langgaard at blive rigtig accepteret, hverken af pressen eller af de toneangivende musikautoriteter i Danmark.

Da Rued Langgaard i 1911 havde fuldført sin timelange første symfoni, viste det sig således umuligt at få værket opført i Danmark. I flere omgange havde Langgaard været på studieophold i Berlin, fulgt af sine forældre, og Langgaard-familiens kontakter med dirigenter som Arthur Nikisch og Max Fiedler førte til, at symfonien i 1913 blev uropført i Berlin af Berliner Filharmonikerne under Max Fiedlers ledelse. Den overstrømmende succes, der ved denne lejlighed blev den 19-årige komponist til del, førte dog ikke til, at symfonien blev opført i Danmark, og verdenskrigens udbrud i 1914 gjorde det umuligt for Langgaard at følge succesen op på tysk grund.

Det danske musiklivs skepsis over for Langgaard medførte, at han havde vanskeligt ved at få sine kompositioner opført og selv måtte foranstalte koncerter for at kunne præsentere sin musik. Den ekspansive kunstneriske udvikling, han gennemløb efter 1916, gik således hen over hovedet på såvel kritikere som publikum. Væsentlige og eksperimenterende værker som *Sinfonia interna* (1915-16), *Sfærenes musik* (1916-18),

Symfoni nr. 6 (1919-20) og operaen *Antikrist* (1921-23) blev enten ikke opført i Danmark eller ikke forstået.

Rued Langgaard var her i landet ene om at stræbe mod et visionært musikalsk udtryk i forlængelse af den romantiske tradition og på et symbolistisk grundlag, som man f.eks. finder det hos Skrjabin. Tendensen gik i Danmark i retning af et opgør med hele den senromantiske ånd, og Langgaard måtte til Tyskland, for – i begyndelsen af 1920'erne – at opleve succesrige opførelser af sine symfonier. Der var dog ikke tale om nogen udbredt eller generel interesse for Langgaard sydpå, og det ebbede hurtigt ud med opførelser.

Årene omkring 1924-25 betegner et stort vendepunkt i Langgaards liv og musik. Efter i en række år at have været åben og lydhør over for strømninger i den nyeste musik – ikke mindst i Carl Nielsens progressive værker – ændrede Langgaard kurs og slog ind på en romantisk og pasticheagtig stil med Niels W. Gade og Wagner som forbilleder. Han gav udtryk for, at han følte sig forrådt af tiden og af det etablerede musikliv, og han langede ud efter Carl Nielsen, som efter hans mening havde en alt for guruagtig status. Resultatet blev, at Langgaard for alvor blev lagt på is. Efter 1930 fandt koncertopførelser af hans værker kun undtagelsesvis sted (han havde til gengæld en hel del radioopførelser, især i 1940'erne). Et job som kirkeorganist kunne han ikke få, selvom han søgte et utal af stillinger rundt om i landet. Det lykkedes ham først i 1940, som 47-årig, at få et organistembede ved domkirken i Ribe. I Ribe gik Langgaards musik ind i en ny fase, hvor det trodsige, forrevne og absurde bliver mere fremtrædende.

Efter Langgaards død i 1952 blev der stille omkring hans navn, men i 1960'erne bragte den fornyede interesse for 'oversete' senromantikere Langgaard frem i lyset: Man opdagede, at selvom Langgaard grundlæggende var en konservativ komponist, var der træk i hans musik, som på en mærkelig måde pegede frem mod 1960'ernes og 70'ernes tilstandsmusik, collagemusik og minimalisme.

I dag foreligger utallige af hans 431 kompositioner indspillet. Hans produktion og liv er beskrevet i bogform, og hans værker, der for størstedelens vedkommende forblev utrykte, er for tiden under udgivelse.

## RUED LANGGAARDS STRYGEKVARTETTER

Rued Langgaards bidrag til strygekvartetgenren blev i hovedsagen til inden for et tidsrum på kun 11 år, fra 1914 til 1925. I denne periode komponerede han otte kvartetter, hvoraf de fire blev skabt i løbet af kun 12 måneder (1918-19). Værkerne blev altså til i komponistens produktive og uhyre ekspansive ungdomsår, hvor han også skabte hovedværker som symfoni nr. 4 og 6, *Sfærenes Musik* og operaen *Antikrist*. I den følgende fase fra 1925 til 1940, hvor han næsten gik i stå med at komponere, tog han flere af de otte kvartetværker op til revision og bearbejdelse, således at nye versioner så dagens lys. Helt nye bidrag til genren kom der dog ikke fra Langgaards hånd, bortset fra to små satser, der blev til omkring 1950, dels et lille stykke, som i dag er forsvundet, skrevet til minde om komponisten Niels W. Gade, og dels en ultrakort *Italiensk Scherzo*.

Værkfortegnelsen opregner 10 kendte, selvstændige kompositioner af Langgaard for strygekvartet. Komponistens typiske arbejdsform, som er karakteriseret ved 'genbrug' og gentagne revisioner, har medført, at hele satser og visse temaer går igen i forskellige værker. Yderligere forvirring skaber den nummerering af strygekvartetterne, som blev gennemført af Langgaard i 1930'erne, og som ikke medtager alle værkerne og heller ikke korresponderer med tilblivelsesrækkefølgen. Følgende liste giver et kronologisk overblik:

### Strygekvartet nr. 1 (BVN 68)

E-dur, 4 satser. Komponeret 1914-15, delvis kasseret, men revideret og rekonstrueret i 1936.

Sats 4 inddraget i omarbejdet form som sats 4 i strygekvartet nr. 5.

### Variationer over "Mig hjertelig nu længes" (BVN 71)

E-dur. Introduktion og syv variationer. Komponeret 1914-15, revideret og forsynet med ny introduktion 1931/1940.

### Strygekvartet nr. 2 (BVN 145)

d-mol, 4 satser. Komponeret 1918, revideret 1931.

### Rosengardsspil (BVN 153)

E-dur, 4 satser. Komponeret 1918.

Sats 1 og 4 genanvendt i revideret form som sats 1 og 3 i strygekvartet nr. 4.

### Strygekvartet (As-dur) (BVN 155)

As-dur, 4 satser. Komponeret 1918.

### Strygekvartet nr. 6 (BVN 160)

d-mol, én sats. Komponeret 1918-19.

### Strygekvartet nr. 3 (BVN 183)

3 satser. Komponeret 1924.

### Strygekvartet nr. 5 (BVN 189)

F-dur, 4 satser. Komponeret 1925, revideret 1926-38.

Sats 4 er en omarbejdet version af strygekvartet nr. 1, sats 4.

### Strygekvartet nr. 4 "Sommerdage" (BVN 215)

F-dur, 3 satser. Komponeret 1931 (på basis af materiale fra 1914-18).

Sats 1 og 3 er reviderede versioner af sats 1 og 4 af *Rosengardsspil*; sats 2 er baseret på strygekvartet nr. 1, sats 2.

### Strygekvartetsats "Italiensk Scherzo" (BVN 408)

F-dur. Komponeret 1950.

Rued Langgaard skrev ikke sine strygekvartetværker til bestemte ensembler – med undtagelse af nr. 3, som blev komponeret til en af de bedste kammerensembler i 1920'ernes Danmark, Breuning-Bache-Kvartetten. Strygekvartet nr. 3 er også det eneste af de 10 værker, der blev udgivet i komponistens levetid, i 1931. De øvrige er først blevet publiceret efter 1993, de sidste seks så sent som i forbindelse med nærværende indspilningsprojekt og i regi af *Rued Langgaard Udgiven*. Tre af værkerne på listen blev ikke opført i Langgaards

tid, og alt i alt blev det kun til 10 koncertopførelser af disse værker i hans levetid. Kvartet nr. 3 blev opført fire gange, den sidste gang af Gerhard Rafn-Kvartetten under festivalen Nordiske Musikdage i Oslo i 1934. Desuden var der i 1930'erne og 40'erne sporadiske radioopførelser af nr. 2, 3 og 5. Herefter ebber interessen for Langgaards strygekvartetter ud. I 1972 udgives den første indspilning af en af kvartetterne, nr. 3, med Københavns Strygekvartet, og en milepæl nås i 1984, hvor Kontra-Kvartetten indspiller seks af værkerne og gør Langgaards strygekvartetter kendte gennem utallige opførelser i ind- og udland.

Det bemærkelsesværdige ved Langgaards musik for strygekvartet er det store stil-mæssige spektrum, værkerne samlet set dækker. De blev til i brydningstiden mellem senromantik og modernisme, og det er for så vidt et tidstypisk træk, at Langgaard i tone-sproget snart kaster sig ud i *retro*-retningen, snart i *avantgarde*-retningen, men uden at fravige de klassiske, formmæssige normer. I Langgaards kvartetter finder vi således både klassicistiske, romantiske, neoklassiske, ekspressionistiske og modernistiske træk – kort sagt spænder musikkens tonesprog over hele skalaen fra Mozart til Bartók. Den neoklassiske tendens, som ikke kendes tilsvarende fra Langgaards symfonier, slår igennem i satsen *Mozart* (af *Rosengårdsspil*), og præger helt igennem strygekvartet i *As-dur*, der næsten er en wienerklassisk pastiche. På den anden yderfløj finder vi strygekvartet nr. 3, som med et aggressivt ekspressionistisk tonesprog repræsenterer den vildeste avantgarde i dansk musik anno 1924. Et særtræk ved kvartetterne, i modsætning til Langgaards symfoniske musik, er, at man blandt de i alt 29 satser finder både deciderede (og humoristiske) scherzosatser og nogle af de vægtigste langsomme satser, Langgaard skrev.

Flere af værkerne har en ganske særlig inspirationsmæssig baggrund. I 1913 var den 20-årige Langgaard på ferie i Sverige, i den lille kurby Kyrkhult i Blekinge, hvor han (sammen med sine forældre), var indlogeret i en ejendom, som kaldtes "Rosengården". Opholdet her fik livslang betydning for Langgaard, først og fremmest, må vi tro, fordi han var blevet forelsket i en pige ved navn Dora (hvis identitet i øvrigt, den dag i dag, er ukendt). På Rosengården skrev Langgaard nogle kærlighedssange til tekster af Goethe, og disse sange og stemningsbilleder fra denne sommer danner fem år senere inspirationsgrundlag for hele tre strygekvartetter. Disse nostalgiske værker fik i første omgang alle

tre titlen *Rosengårdsspil*, men skiftede senere titel (den ene kvartet er dog udgivet i sin oprindelige form under titlen *Rosengårdsspil*, mens samme værk i i omarbejdet skikkelse betegnes strygekvartet nr. 4; de to andre er strygekvartet i *As-dur* og strygekvartet nr. 6). Også kvartet nr. 1 er relateret til Rosengården og blev en overgang kaldt *Rosengårdsspil*. Scherzosatsen er baseret på Goethe-sangen *Gleich und gleich*, der handler om den lille blomt og den lille bi! Motiver fra denne sang går igen i *Rosengårdsspil* (1. sats) og strygekvartet nr. 4 (1. og 2. sats). Et andet ledemotiv med reference til Rosengården optræder i begyndelsen af strygekvartet nr. 1's finale og genfindes i såvel *Rosengårdsspil* som i strygekvartet nr. 4. Fem af kvartetterne indgår altså i et kompleks af værker med sommeren 1913 som fælles inspirationskilde. Og som man kan forstå, er det ikke nogen tilfældighed, at strygekvartet nr. 6 citerer den svenske folkevise "Och hör du unga Dora vill du gifta dig i år".

## STRYGEKVARTET NR. 2

Værket blev til i januar-februar 1918 og uropført ved en koncert, Langgaard selv arrangerede på konservatoriet i København i 1919. Det karske og aggressive i tonesproget var ikke noget for musikkritikerne, men værket må have gjort indtryk i det progressive musikmiljø, for kvartetten blev genopført i 1922 i Unge Tonekunstneres Selskab, den forening der varetog den ny musiks interesser. I 1931 reviderede Langgaard værket, dog kun i beskedent omfang, og i denne form blev det opført i radioen i 1938 af Gerhard Rafn-Kvartetten. Den oprindelige titel var *Komposition for fire Strygeinstrumenter*, og heri antydes værkets kontante og 'moderne' holdning. Første sats veksler mellem "fyrige" passager (*allegro focoloso*), og afsnit af kontemplativ karakter. Slutningen beherskes af det dissonerende tritonusinterval es-a, som hele værket også afsluttes med. Anden sats er 'futuristisk maskinmusik', et tog passerer forbi for fuld damp og togskinnerne hviner. Denne 'realistiske' skildring af et lokomotiv er komponeret fem år før Honeggers berømte orkesterværk *Pacific 231*. Tredje sats var oprindeligt betitlet *Landskab med Spillemand*, som titlen på et maleri. Der panoreres hen over et landskab, og undervejs passerer vi en spillemand, som leverer en *fiero alla zingaresa*-solo, hvorefter landskabet atter kommer i fokus. Finalen har en sammensat karakter, men bindes sammen af et

gentaget, energisk *alla marcia risoluto*-afsnit. Titlen *Vandring* skal måske opfattes helt bogstaveligt som en spadseretur, hvor 'marchen' afbrydes af vekslende vuer, som karakteriseres bl.a. gennem romantiske og mysteriøse klange.

### STRYGEKVARTET NR. 3

Den københavnsbaserede Breuning-Bache-Kvartet planlagde i 1924 en koncert med musik af unge danske komponister og henvendte sig i den forbindelse til Langgaard for at høre om han havde et passende værk 'på lager'. Henvendelsen inspirerede ham til at levere en helt ny kvartet, som blev komponeret og renskrevet i løbet af én uge og uropført samme måned (september 1924). Igen var musikkritikerne fuldstændig uforstående, mens der blandt Langgaards kolleger kunne spores en vis interesse, som førte til at kvartetten blev trykt i 1931. Richard Hoves anmeldelse af udgivelsen i *Dansk Musik Tidsskrift* blev en af de mest positive værkoptaler, Langgaard nogensinde fik. Hove taler om "den guddommelige gnist", om "eruptioner af et eventyrligt temperament" og om værkets "store, indre slagkraft". Værket udfolder det mest rabiat eksperimenterende tonesprog, man finder i dansk musik før Carl Nielsens 6. symfoni (1925). Ligesom Nielsen (i 6. symfoni) ironiserer Langgaard her over den moderne musik, men leverer jo samtidig et gedigent forsvar for den. Langgaards karakterbetegnelser, f. eks. *rapinoso* (rovbegærligt), *artifizioso* (underfundigt) og *schernevole* (spodsk), antyder hans holdning til det dissonerende og aggressive i tonesproget. Kontrasten hertil er den koral, som indleder sidste sats, og som midt i satsen forsøger at gøre sig gældende i den moderne musiks malstrøm – og til sidst går af med sejren. Melodien er skrevet til B. S. Ingemans salme "Den store mester kommer", og som firestemmig sats er den for få år siden optaget i den danske folkekirkes officielle koralbog.

### STRYGEKVARTET NR. 6

Den énsatsede kvartet blev komponeret i løbet af tre dage omkring årsskiftet 1918/19 og uropført mindre end to måneder senere ved en koncert, Langgaard selv arrangerede på konservatoriet i København. I programmet betegnes værket *Rosengårdsspil* (over en svensk Folkevis), og kompositionen er tydeligvis inspireret af sommeropholdet på Rosen-

gården i Sverige i 1913. Det virker som et stykke programmusik, der i en fri form skildrer selvpoplevede episoder og stemninger. Idylliske og vemodige passager veksler med scherzoprægede indslag i satsens første del i hvilket to recitativiske soloafsnit, først i bratsch og senere i violin, citerer en svensk folkevis om ulykkelig kærlighed, "Allt under himmelens fäste". Et ekspressivt afsnit leder over i en festlig vals i svensk spillemandsstil (*burlesco rustico*), og herefter følger værkets afsluttende del, der er baseret på den svenske folkevis "Och hör du unga Dora vill du gifta dig i år", også denne vise er om uengældt kærlighed. Efter uropførelsen blev værket lagt til side af Langgaard, men fundet frem igen i 1940'erne og forsynet med betegnelsen strygekvartet nr. 6 i én sats (numrene 1-5 var allerede optaget). Andenopførelsen fandt først sted i Danmarks Radio i 1980.

### VARIATIONER OVER "MIG HJERTELIG NU LÆNGES"

Kompositionen bærer undertitlen *Kammermusik for to violiner, bratsch og cello*. Melodien, som i dag er bedre kendt under titlen "Befal du dine veje", er komponeret af Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612), men benyttes i en senere, traditionel koralform. Kvartetten blev komponeret i juli 1914, men først renskrevet sommeren 1915. Den blev lagt på hylden, men genoplivet af Langgaard i 1940. Den oprindelige introduktion, som åbenbart var bortkommet, blev nu erstattet af en ny indledning i form af en bearbejdelse af et orgelpraeludium til "Mig hjertelig nu længes", som Langgaard havde skrevet til brug for en begravelse i 1931. Salmemelodien høres i hele sin udstrækning kun i variation I (i cellostemmen), mens slutningen dukker op igen i variation VII (i førsteviolinstemmen). Variationerne er et af komponistens mest rendyrket klassicistiske værker, som giver mindelser om Beethovens sene kvartetter. Kompositionen blev uropført i 1967.

## NIGHTINGALE STRING QUARTET

Nightingale String Quartet blev dannet i 2007 og består af Gunvor Sihm og Josefine Dalsgaard, violiner, Marie Louise Broholt Jensen, bratsch, og Louisa Schwab, cello. Alle fire studerer på kandidatuddannelsen på Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium med Tim Frederiksen som trofast mentor og kammermusiklærer. Nightingale String Quartet modtog i oktober 2010 P2's Talentpris. Med dommerkomiteens ord: "for med brændende passion, uimodståelig gejst og smittende indbyrdes lydhørhed at få den klassiske stygekvartet til at sprælle af liv – så musikken taler direkte og stærkt til både nye og gamle lyttere". Nightingale String Quartet har vundet priser ved flere nationale og internationale kammermusikkonkurrencer. I juni 2008 vandt kvartetten 1. pris i DKDMs årlige kammermusik-legatkonkurrence. Efter at have spillet sammen i kun halvandet år vandt kvartetten 2. pris ved P2's kammermusikkonkurrence i februar 2009. Dette blev startskuddet til en lang række koncerter i kammermusikforeninger over hele Danmark. I april 2010 vandt kvartetten 2. pris ved den internationale kammermusikkonkurrence "Charles Hennen Concours", som fandt sted i Holland. Som følge af placeringen ved konkurrencen blev Nightingale String Quartet helt eksklusivt inviteret til at deltage i sommerkurset "Orlando Festival" i Holland sammen med kun 3 andre prisvindende kvartetter. Ved kurset modtog de dagligt undervisning af den legendariske violinist Shmuel Ashkenasi i form af åbne masterclasses, samt spillede flere koncerter i området. Kvartetten modtog i 2010 Jacob Gades Store Legat og i 2011 Léonie Sonnings Musikfonds "lille" musikpris.

Nightingale String Quartets navn er inspireret af H.C. Andersens fortælling om den lille nattergal.

[www.nightingalestringquartet.com](http://www.nightingalestringquartet.com)



NIGHTINGALE STRING QUARTET

DDD

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Liner notes: Bendt Viinholt Nielsen

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