

Vagn Holmboe
Works for Choir and Ensemble

V Coloris
Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir
Conducted by Mogens Dahl

Vagn Holmboe (1909–1996)

Works for Choir and Ensemble

Die Erfüllung ('The Fulfilment'), Op. 183 (1990, rev. 1993) 22:23

for soprano and baritone soloists, double choir, woodwind and brass

Text by Novalis

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 1 | I. | 2:47 |
| 2 | II. | 2:40 |
| 3 | III. | 4:33 |
| 4 | IV. | 3:59 |
| 5 | V. | 5:00 |
| 6 | VI. | 3:38 |

7 **Song at Sunset, Op. 138b (1978)** 8:39

for mixed choir. Text by Walt Whitman

Ode til sjælen ('Ode to the Soul'), Op. 161 (1985) 23:45

for solo voices, mixed choir, brass sextet and organ

Text by Johannes Ewald

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 8 | I. | 9:22 |
| 9 | II. | 6:53 |
| 10 | III. | 7:29 |

World premiere recordings (live recording) Total 55:05

Kathrin Lorenzen, soprano¹⁻⁶

René Bloice-Sanders, baritone¹⁻⁶

Jihye Kim, soprano^{8,9}

Nils Greenhow, tenor¹⁰

Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir

V Coloris¹⁻⁶

Stefan Diaconu, flute

Jonas Frølund, clarinet

Felicia Greciuc, oboe

Niklas Kallsoy Mouritsen, horn^{1-6, 8-10}

Constantin Barcov, bassoon

Lasse Mouritsen, horn⁸⁻¹⁰

Gustav Melander, trumpet

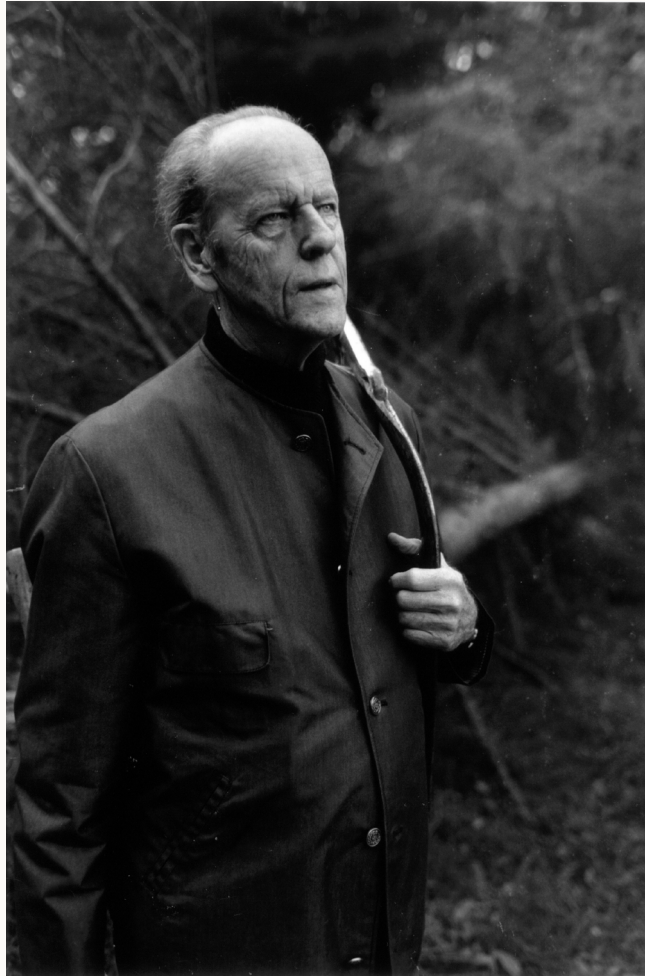
László Molnár, trumpet

Marek Stolarczyk, trombone

Thomas Røisland, tuba

Jakob Lorentzen, organ⁸⁻¹⁰

Conducted by Mogens Dahl



Vagn Holmboe

The Fulfilment

By Thomas Michelsen

Vagn Holmboe's late choral works from the 1980s and 1990s are predominantly hymns. They range from *Two Sarvig Hymns*, Op. 154, of 1983, to the final movements of his lifelong motet cycle *Liber canticorum*, which the composer began in the 1950s, and to settings for mixed choir of two Psalms of David. There are other works too – lesser known, but no less significant.

In 1989, Holmboe composed *Winter* for soprano and eight-part mixed choir. It sets spiritual texts by the American poet John Gracen Brown, drawn from his collections, *A Sojourn of the Spirit*, and *Passages in the Wind* (1981).

The following year, in 1990, Holmboe followed up with the major choral work, *Die Erfüllung* for soprano and baritone soloists, double choir, and woodwind and brass.

Die Erfüllung, which became Holmboe's Opus 183, was composed to texts from the German poet Novalis' *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. It is an unfinished novel, in which the early Romantic's magically idealistic worldview embraces the exalted idea of time and space being suspended. Novalis' dark and fantastic text, with its talk of a new world, the manifestation of God's face in all things, and the opening of a kingdom of love, appealed to Holmboe. Indeed, he said it felt entirely contemporary to him.

This may sound surprising, yet Vagn Holmboe was a profoundly spiritual composer who, through the musical metamorphosis technique he became known for, experienced the

realisation of eternal transformation and the rebirth of all things. He felt a kinship with Haydn akin to that with a contemporary composer. It may initially seem odd, but Holmboe had, from his teenage years, been familiar with the Hindu scriptures and convinced of Buddhist ideas such as reincarnation and the cosmic unity of all things – so a few centuries are no distance.

Religious texts such as the ancient *Mahabharata* epic, which contains one of Hinduism's most widely known and read works, the *Bhagavadgita*, he encountered at the age of fourteen. That Holmboe from a young age lived in a world of 'deep' truths inspired by Hinduism and Buddhism is evident from private letters and, most importantly, his diaries. For example, in early 1929, at the age of nineteen, he wrote: 'Why is there development in life itself – and does it occur through all the many lives we must pass?'

Steiner Congress in Skanderborg

Die Erfüllung, with its opening brass fanfares and calm contrapuntal lines, was composed at the request of the English music therapist Jane Brewer, who was closely associated with the anthroposophical movement. She worked within the Rudolf Steiner movement and had originally wished to commission a work from Holmboe's most famous pupil, Per Nørgård. But he had no time to accept the commission, and in the end Holmboe composed a roughly twenty-minute choral work in four sections.

In that form, *Die Erfüllung* was premiered at an international Steiner Congress in Skanderborg, situated in central Jutland, in October 1990. The premiere took place as a private performance in the Audonicon concert hall of the Steiner cultural centre, with soprano and vocal teacher Monika Mayr and baritone and anthroposophist Michael Deason-Barrow

as the soloists. In addition, a choir was formed from festival participants, supported by students from the conservatoires in Odense and Aarhus. The performance was conducted by the Norwegian conductor Holger Arden, then, as now, deeply committed to anthroposophical thought, and who subsequently performed the work several times in Norway and once at a Steiner Congress in Prague.

At Brewer's prompting, Holmboe added two more sections in the summer of 1993, because she wished to include more of Novalis' text. The finished work thus comprises six sections with a total duration of around twenty-five minutes.

That *Die Erfüllung* was written for the Steiner movement, and that it has lived within that framework may explain why it has remained unknown to the wider public, where the expansiveness and obscurity of the text would likely have met with incomprehension. In the same way, in the late 1960s, Holmboe's equally overlooked work *Zeit*, Op. 94, for mezzo-soprano and string quartet, was similarly neglected; the spiritually oriented and highly ambitious German text was by the Czech author Renata Pandula (1930–87).

Deep Cosmic Truths

The Austrian philosopher and esotericist Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), founder of the educational Steiner movement, himself wrote several mystery plays. Novalis' novel fragment, named after the medieval German minnesinger Heinrich von Ofterdingen, is deeply mysterious in content.

Novalis was the pen name of the noble poet, philosopher and natural scientist Georg Philipp Friedrich Freiherr von Hardenberg (1772–1801). He was a friend of the writer Friedrich Schiller and the philosopher Friedrich Schlegel, and in every way a central figure of early German Romanti-

cism. His posthumously published novel, in its fragmentary form, embodies the ideals of Romanticism, showing how he, fully in the spirit of the age, fused his preoccupations with everything from philosophy to chemistry and mineralogy into a single artistic expression. This is an expression in which love is something universal, extending far beyond the romantic notion of love, and where the magical, as Novalis saw it, regains its place, which it had lost under Enlightenment rationalism.

In this so-called spirit of magical idealism, the worlds of language and physical reality are broken down and transcended, so that a 'wunderseltsame Zukunft' (a 'marvellous future') may be glimpsed, and what was once mundane appears 'fremd und wunderbar' ('strange and wonderful').

Novalis' lofty words are introduced by Holmboe with festive yet serious brass fanfares. Together, the voices present the new world, before the soprano soloist, as a prophet, reveals what awaits when we recognise the deep cosmic truths.

Holmboe was never open publically about his deeply spiritual, cosmic view of life. Although, from the 1940s onward, he gave many interviews and presented his music publicly on radio, television and in concert, he kept the sources of his music private. Yet concepts as magic, ecstasy, and the cosmic lay at the heart of his musical thinking, as revealed when this author was permitted to read the composer's unpublished letters and diaries during the preparation of the biography (*Det dybe og det rene*) (*The Deep and the Pure*), published by Multivers in 2022.

One in all, and all in one

Holmboe responds with perfect naturalness to Novalis' starry clouds of words, which in *Die Erfüllung – The Fulfilment*

in English – declare: ‘dann fliegt vor einem geheimen Wort das ganze verkehrte Wesen fort’ (‘then, at a secret word, the whole distorted being vanishes’).

In the work’s second section, the baritone soloist joins the prophecy with the fairy-tale words of a queen who will awaken from a long sleep, ‘wenn Meer und Land in Liebesglut zerrinnt’ (‘as sea and land dissolve in the fire of love’).

‘Eins in allem und alles in Einen’ (‘All in one, and one in all’), it is written in the third section, where Holmboe, with his Buddhist-inspired outlook on life, could spontaneously respond to Novalis’ vision, one which corresponds well to Holmboe’s fundamental recognition that ‘you are nature, I am nature; you are part of that tree out there, and the tree is part of you;’ he remarked in a late-life interview with *Dansk Musiktidskrift* (the Danish Music Journal), offering the public a rare glimpse of his worldview.

Holmboe’s music is not characterised by overt word-painting; rather, it reflects the depth and beauty of the text on a more profound level.

For Holmboe, music could certainly spring from concrete events or phenomena outside the music itself, but his work as a composer was to purify it and make it pure music. External influences could enter his works, but fundamentally he worked with organic development based on intervals or short motifs – seeds, as he called them.

The perfect fifth, used as a final interval in many places in Holmboe’s oeuvre, is prominent. When the soprano soloist opens the fourth section singing: ‘Die Liebe ging auf dunkler Bahn, vom Monde nur erblickt’ (‘Love moved along shadowed paths, seen only by the moon’), and one senses an

echo of Mahler’s *Das Lied von der Erde* (1907–08), it is an unusual allusion to another composer’s music – if indeed it is not a coincidence.

The music of *Die Erfüllung* respects the gravity with which Holmboe treats Novalis’ text. While not literally word-painting, it becomes notably more animated in the fifth section, which begins: ‘Die Fabel fängt zu spinnen an’ (‘The fable spins anew’). After the sixth and final sections concludes the vision of an era in which ‘Zahlen und Figuren’ (‘Numbers and Figures’) are no longer ‘Schlüssel aller Kreaturen’ (‘the keys to life’), the winds recall the fanfare motif from the opening of the work.

Ever the mutable!

When conductor Mogens Dahl and the Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir decided to perform and record *Die Erfüllung*, we looked for other Holmboe works to complement it in concert. The choice fell on *Song at Sunset* and *Ode til sjælen*. Neither work has been particularly well known or performed, but like *Die Erfüllung*, both betray Vagn Holmboe’s strong preoccupation with existence and the spiritual.

Song at Sunset, Op. 138b, dates from 1978. It is composed for mixed choir to a text by the American poet, journalist and author Walt Whitman (1819–92), from whom Holmboe had already borrowed words when writing his Tenth Symphony at the start of the decade. It was verses from Whitman’s poem with the Greek title ‘Eidólons’ (1876) that he chose as a preface to the symphony. Because they suited his Buddhist-influenced view of life and his vision of composing as a constant struggle to create cosmos out of chaos. The poem’s lines read, among others: ‘Ever the mutable! / Ever materials, changing, crumbling, re-cohering’.

In *Song at Sunset*, it is the sight of a sunset that fills the poet's throat with air and opens his mouth in a pantheistic praise of the perfection of the cosmos and 'the mystery of the motion in all beings'. As in the multi-volume choral work *Liber canticorum*, Holmboe here demonstrates his mastery of vocal polyphony in a surging, emotionally shifting four-part texture, where voice groups take turns dividing to make the texture fuller and more sensuous.

While *Song at Sunset* is pure a cappella polyphony, *Ode til sjælen* (*Ode to the Soul*), Op. 161, is written for mixed choir with brass sextet and organ. Holmboe composed this substantial work just before his last completed string quartet, No. 20, *Notturmo*, setting the text 'Til Sielen. En Ode' ('To the Soul. An Ode') by the Romantic Danish poet Johannes Ewald (1743–81).

In addition to the choir, Holmboe composed for two vocal soloists ad libitum, a soprano and a tenor. The local Frederiksborg County Music Committee in North Zealand, where Holmboe lived for the last many years of his life, had commissioned a choral work, and the composer chose to present the amateur singers of the Frederiksborg Chamber Choir and Helsingør Chamber Choir with a serious challenge when they were to premiere the result in Frederiksborg Palace Chapel in November 1986 as part of an all-Holmboe concert.

The use of organ and brass was due to *Ode til sjælen* being performed alongside *Contrasti* for organ and the second of Holmboe's two brass quintets.

Like Whitman, the eighteenth-century poet Ewald finds his inspiration in nature – here among creatures from birds to predators and snakes – when explaining how only God's

'flame of love' can lift the human soul with its 'featherless wings' up from 'the clay' in which it crawls, so that it may soar up to the angels from whence it came.

Holmboe's musical language is characteristically unreserved in its bracing austerity. Against this background, Ewald's Romantic text seems particularly bombastic compared to Whitman's, which somehow manages to describe something equally lofty with words over which one does not stumble in the same way. Yet both texts deal with the ultimate in the form of the spiritual. And for Holmboe, it is typical that something which might seem old-fashioned and high-flown to many, seemed contemporary and natural to him.

Forgotten and Thoroughly Hidden

Vagn Holmboe has been perceived as a Nordic composer in the tradition of Carl Nielsen, although in fact his view of his great predecessor's music evolved from outright negativity to nuance. Because he remained largely silent in public about how his artistic and philosophical outlook was grounded in Eastern religion and philosophy, the main work on this album, *Die Erfüllung*, has, until now, not been part of our picture of Holmboe and his musical *oeuvre*. Like *Zeit*, it has long remained hidden from view.

Holmboe's chamber music – especially his more than twenty masterful string quartets – together with his thirteen symphonies, the symphonic metamorphoses, and the choral compendium *Liber canticorum*, have instead claimed attention. In the same way, his creative engagement with modernist twelve-tone music, aleatoric composition, and serialism in the 1950s and 1960s has received very little attention.

It is evident in many contexts that Holmboe tended to realise his ideas in pairs or 'sister works'. Among the most familiar

examples are his solo works for guitar and accordion. Considering *Zeit* from the late 1960s and *Die Erfüllung* from the early 1990s as such a sibling pair reveals this tendency: two 'deep' spiritual, text-based works presented vocally – one accompanied by four strings, the other by nine winds. Both tell of a composer who believed his music embodied the cosmic and the eternal transformation of all things.

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Thomas Michelsen has written about classical music for three decades and is currently Music Editor at Politiken. He holds a Master's degree in Musicology and the History of Philosophy and in 2022 published the first biography of Vagn Holmboe, Det dybe og det rene (The Deep and the Pure).



Kathrin Lorenzen with Mogens Dahl Kammerkor, conducted by Mogens Dahl, during the live performance of *Die Erfüllung*, Op. 183

German soprano **Kathrin Lorenzen** grew up near Flensburg and began her musical path studying church music. She was active early on in ensembles such as the World Youth Choir and Kammerchor Stuttgart before shifting her focus entirely to singing. After studies in Saarbrücken, she moved to Stockholm in 2021, where she is now a permanent member of the Swedish Radio Choir. Parallel to this, she has established herself as a soloist; in 2023, she won 1st prize at the International Telemann Competition in Magdeburg. She is deeply committed to chamber music, particularly through her regular duo partnership with pianist Oskar Ekberg. Lorenzen is a member of the Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir.

Soprano **Jihye Kim** was born in South Korea, where she trained at Seoul National University before moving to Italy to complete her studies at the Santa Cecilia Conservatory in Rome in 2008. She has won numerous prizes in international competitions, including the Benvenuto Franci and the Vincenzo Bellini award. In 2013, she moved to Germany, performing with prestigious ensembles such as the RIAS Kammerchor and the Leipzig Rundfunkchor. Since 2015, she has been a permanent member of the Danish National Vocal Ensemble. She is a member of the Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir.

British tenor and composer **Nils Greenhow** graduated from York University in 2012. In the UK, he has performed with distinguished ensembles such as the Choir of Westminster Abbey, London Voices, and St Martin's Voices. His connection to Denmark began in 2016 when he stepped in with just one day's notice for a concert with the Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir, of which he has since been a permanent member. He moved to Denmark four years later, performing with Ars Nova and Musica Ficta. Since 2022, he has been a permanent tenor with the Danish National Vocal Ensemble.

Alongside his singing career, he is a sought-after choral composer.

British baritone **René Bloice-Sanders** began his career as a chorister at Canterbury Cathedral. He was educated at the University of Nottingham and the Royal Academy of Music in London, graduating with distinction and receiving the Nora Carstairs Bland Award. On the operatic stage, he has performed roles such as Figaro, Eugene Onegin, and Marcello with companies including The Grange Festival, Garsington Opera, and Wexford Festival Opera. His concert repertoire ranges widely from Bach's Passions to romantic works, and he reached the semi-finals of the Opera By Voice Alone competition. Bloice-Sanders is a member of the Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir.

The Copenhagen-based wind quintet **V Coloris** represents a fusion of diverse cultures and nationalities, inspiring a name that emphasises colour and richness. Folk music and contemporary music form the two main strands of V Coloris' artistic work. Drawing inspiration from traditional melodies, they often create their own arrangements of works with folk roots, exploring new sonorities and expressive possibilities within the wind quintet format. V Coloris collaborates regularly with leading composers such as Doina Rotaru, Karin Rehnqvist, Hans Abrahamsen, Mette Nielsen, and Lil Lacy, and is committed to commissioning and performing new works that expand the repertoire and resonate with today's audiences. The ensemble also takes an active role as an initiator of concert series and cross-disciplinary projects, reaching listeners of all ages through imaginative programming and collaborations with artists from other disciplines.

Since its founding in 2006, **Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir** has been synonymous with choral music of the highest

quality. Singers are selected from a wider pool of around 40 artists from Scandinavia, Germany, and England, allowing the ensemble to be tailored to the specific repertoire and artistic demands of each project. At the heart of the choir's repertoire lies the Nordic a cappella tradition, with a deep appreciation for the region's characteristic choral sound and linguistic nuances, as reflected in several of their recordings. The choir aims to shape the future of vocal music in the Nordic region, continually exploring new artistic directions through creative collaborations. It frequently performs newly composed works by leading Nordic composers, many written specifically for the ensemble. Foremost among these was the late Swedish composer Sven-David Sandström, who served as the choir's composer-in-residence until his death in 2019 and dedicated several major choral works to the group. He was succeeded by Per Gunnar Pettersson, the choir's current composer-in-residence.

Ongoing collaborations include work with prominent ensembles such as the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, with whom the choir gives annual performances of Handel's *Messiah* in Copenhagen. Notable highlights from the past two decades include a concert at DR Koncerthuset with soprano Anna Netrebko (2009), the world premiere of Sandström's *Nordic Mass* at the Bergen International Festival (2014) and his *The Passion of St John* at Konzerthaus Berlin (2016), recording the score for the Danish film *The Volunteers* (2019); and the world premiere of Missy Mazzoli's *Year of Our Burning* at the Bergen International Festival (2022).

Organist **Jakob Lorentzen** graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Music as a student of Hans Fagius, Amalie Malling and Dan-Olof Stenlund. He supplemented his education at the Paris Conservatoire, where he studied piano, improvi-

sation, and organ in the soloist class with Susan Landale, concluding with the 'Prix de virtuosité' in 1995. Since 1997, Lorentzen has served as the organist and kantor at Holmens Church and Christiansborg Palace Chapel in Copenhagen. Lorentzen has founded and directed several vocal ensembles. In 2005, he established the Holmens Vocal Ensemble, which specialises in the performance of early vocal music.

Mogens Dahl is the founder and conductor of Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir, which he has developed into one of Scandinavia's leading vocal ensembles. He trained at the Department of Musicology at Aarhus University and the Royal Danish Academy of Music, furthering his studies with renowned figures including Eric Ericson and Jorma Panula. Dahl has also held teaching positions at the Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus and Aalborg University. From 1991 to 2003, he served as chorus master at the Danish National Opera.

A large number of Mogens Dahl's projects are based on newly composed works dedicated to him and the Chamber Choir by leading Scandinavian composers. His visionary work with Nordic vocal music has led to remarkable collaborations with composers and musicians across traditional genre boundaries. For several years, Mogens Dahl has conducted the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in connection with the Chamber Choir's annual *Messiah* concerts in Holmens Church, Copenhagen.

Die Erfüllung, Op. 183

Text by Novalis (1772–1801)

- Track No. 1 Es bricht die neue Welt herein
und verdunkelt den hellsten Sonnenschein,
man sieht nun aus bemoosten Trümmern
eine wunderseltensame Zukunft schimmern,
und was vordem alltäglich war,
scheint jetzo fremd und wunderbar.
- 2 Nicht lange wird der schöne Fremde säumen.
Die Wärme naht, die Ewigkeit beginnt.
Die Königin erwacht aus langen Träumen,
wenn Meer und Land in Liebesglut zerrinnt.
Die kalte Nacht wird diese Städte räumen,
wenn Fabel erst das alte Recht gewinnt.
In Freyas Schoß wird sich die Welt entzünden
und jene Sehnsucht ihre Sehnsucht finden.
- 3 Eins in allem und alles in Einen,
Gottes Bild auf Kräutern und Steinen,
Gottes Geist in Menschen und Tieren,
dies muss man sich zu Gemüte führen.
Keine Ordnung mehr nach Raum und Zeit –
hier Zukunft in der Vergangenheit.
- 4 Der Liebe Reich ist aufgetan¹.
Die Liebe ging auf dunkler Bahn,
vom Monde nur erblickt,
das Schaltenreich war aufgetan
und seltsam aufgeschmückt.
Ein blauer Dunst umschwebte sie
mit einem goldnen Rand,
und eilig zog die Phantasie

Die Erfüllung ('The Fulfilment'), Op. 183

Text by Novalis (1772–1801)

Translated by Colin Roth

- 1 The new world unfolds before us,
casting a shadow on the brightest sun.
Through moss-covered ruins
a strange and wondrous future gleams,
once familiar, now alien,
yet shimmering with destiny.
- 2 The noble stranger lingers not.
Warmth approaches, eternity awakens.
A queen stirs from her long slumber,
while sea and land dissolve in love's glowing fire.
The cold night withdraws from the cities,
as fable reclaims its ancient rights.
In Freya's embrace the world ignites,
and longing meets its mirrored desire.
- 3 One in all, and all in one,
God's image shines in herbs and stones,
God's spirit moves through beast and man –
this we must carry in our hearts.
No law of time or space remains:
the future lies folded in the past.
- 4 The kingdom of love is revealed¹.
Love moves along shadowed paths,
seen only by the moon.
Its hidden realm unfolds in splendour,
circled by a mist of blue, edged in gold.
Imagination sweeps her across lands and rivers,
her heart swelling with wondrous courage.

sie über Strom und Land.
Es hob sich ihre volle Brust
in wunderbarem Mut.
Ein Vorgefühl der künftigen Lust
besprach die wilde Glut.
Die Sehnsucht klagt und wusst' es nicht,
dass Liebe näher kam,
und tiefer grub in ihr Gesicht
sich hoffnungsloser Gram.
Die kleine Schlange blieb getreu:
Sie wies nach Norden hin,
und beide folgten sorgenfrei
der schönen Führerin.

- 5 Die Fabel fängt zu spinnen an.
Das Urspiel jeder Natur beginnt,
auf kräftige Worte jedes sinnt,
und so das große Weltgemüt
überall sich regt und unendlich blüht.
Alles muss in einander greifen,
jedes in Allen dar sich stellt,
indem es sich mit ihnen vermischt
und gierig in ihre Tiefen fällt,
sein eigentümliches Wesen erfrischt
und tausend neue Gedanken erhellt.
Die Welt wird Traum, der Traum wird Welt,
und was man geglaubt, es sei geschehen
kann man von weitem erst kommen sehn.

[Recitation²

Frei soll die Phantasie erst schalten,
nach ihrem Gefallen die Fäden verweben,
hier manches verschleiern, dort manches entfalten,
und endlich in magischen Dunst verschweben.
Wehmut und Wollust, Tod und Leben

A taste of coming joy
kindles the wildest fires.
Longing cries unknowingly,
while love draws ever near,
leaving traces of hopeless grief upon the face.
The little serpent stays true,
pointing north,
and both follow, unburdened,
their faithful guide.

- 5 The fable spins anew.
The primal play of nature stirs,
each element seeking a mighty word.
The world's soul quickens,
blossoms rise endlessly.
All things entwine,
each revealing itself in the All,
blending, refreshing its essence,
and sparking countless new thoughts.
The world becomes dream, the dream becomes world,
and what seemed finished
comes slowly into view.

[Recitation²

Now imagination reigns freely,
weaving, veiling, unfolding,
until all dissolves in a magical haze.
Melancholy, ecstasy, death, and life
intertwine in closest sympathy.
Those who surrender to supreme love
are never healed of its deep wounds.
The bond around the inner eye
must painfully break;
the truest heart must once be orphaned
before it flees the troubled world.

sind hier in innigster Sympathie –
wer sich das höchste Lieb' ergeben,
genest von ihren Wunden nie.
Schmerzhaft muss jenes Band zerreißen,
was sich ums innre Auge zieht,
einmal das treueste Herz verwaisen,
eh es der trüben Welt entflieht.
Der Leib wird aufgelöst in Tränen,
zum weiten Grabe wird die Welt,
in das, verzehrt von bangem Sehnen,
das Herz, als Asche, niederfällt.]

- 6 Wenn nicht mehr Zahlen und Figuren
sind Schlüssel aller Kreaturen,
wenn die, so singen oder küssen,
mehr als die Tiefgelehrten wissen,
wenn sich die Welt ins freie Leben
und in die Welt wird zurückbegeben,
wenn dann sich wieder Licht und Schatten
zu echter Klarheit wieder gatten,
und man in Märchen und Gedichten
erkennt die wahren Weltgeschichten –
dann fliegt vor einem geheimen Wort
das ganze verkehrte Wesen fort.

The body melts to tears,
the world becomes a vast grave,
and the heart, consumed by longing,
falls as ashes.]

- 6 When numbers and figures
are no longer the keys to life,
when those who sing or kiss
know more than the learned,
when life restores itself to the world,
and the world returns to life,
when light and shadow reconcile
in true clarity,
and fairy-tales and poems reveal
the hidden histories of existence –
then, at a single secret word,
the distorted being vanishes.

Notes

¹ Holmboe has taken the text line 'Der Liebe Reich
ist aufgetan' from the passage in Novalis' novel, and
moved it here.

² Vagn Holmboe's revised edition of the score of
Die Erfüllung (1993) includes this passage from
Heinrich von Ofterdingen, intended for recitation.

Song at Sunset, Op. 138b

Text by Walt Whitman (1819–1892)

- 7 Splendor of ended day, floating and filling me!
Hour prophetic – hour resuming the past!
Inflating my throat – you, divine average!
You, Earth and Life, till the last ray gleams, I sing.

Open mouth of my Soul, uttering gladness,
Eyes of my Soul, seeing perfection,
Natural life of me, faithfully praising things;
Corroborating forever the triumph of things.

Illustrious every one!

Illustrious what we name space – sphere of unnum-
ber'd spirits;

Illustrious the mystery of motion, in all beings, even the
tiniest insect;

Illustrious the attribute of speech – the senses – the body;

Illustrious the passing light! Illustrious the pale reflection on
the new moon in the western sky!

Illustrious whatever I see, or hear, or touch, to the last.

...

O setting sun! though the time has come,
I still warble under you, if none else does,
unmitigated adoration.

Illustrious!³

Song at Sunset (“Sang ved solnedgang”), Op. 138b

Tekst af Walt Whitman (1819–1892)

Oversat af Jens Povlsen

- 7 Den svundne dags pragt, der strømmer og fylder mig!
Profetiske time – time, der genoptager det svundne!
Fylder min strube – du, guddommeligt almindelige!
Dig, jord og liv, til den sidste stråle funkler, synger jeg.

Min sjæls åbne mund, der udtrykker glæde,
Min sjæls øjne, der ser det fuldendte,
Mit naturnære liv, der trofast lovpriser tingene;
Og for evigt bekræfter tingenes triumf.

Ærværdig er enhver!

Ærværdig er det, vi kalder rum – sfære af utallige ånder;
Ærværdig er bevægelsens mysterium, i alle væsner, selv
det mindste insekt;

Ærværdig er talens evne – sanserne – kroppen;

Ærværdig er det svindende lys! Ærværdig er det blege
genskin på nymånen i vest!

Ærværdig er, hvad jeg end ser eller hører eller rører ved,
til det sidste.

...

Åh, nedgående sol! Skønt tiden er kommet,
synger jeg stadig under dig, hvis ingen anden gør,
i absolut tilbedelse.

Ærværdig!³

Notes

³ Line added by Holmboe

Ode til sjælen, op. 161

Tekst af Johannes Ewald (1743–1781)

- 8 Sig, du nedfaldne, spæde, afmægtige
broder af engle! Sig, hvi udspreder du
fjerløse vinger? – Ak, forgæves
flagrer du op mod din første bolig!

Som da, når ørnens næppe bedunede
unge, forvoven glemmer sin moders røst,
og klavrende på redens kanter
styrter, og vågner i kolde skygger.

På myrens fodsti, føler den krybende
sin tabte højhed, føler sig ørn endnu,
og higer, som dens ædle brødre,
efter din stråle, du dagens hersker!

...

Herlig, ak herlig var du, da jubelsang
vakte dig, da dit blivende øjekast
så godheds værk og visdoms under
svæve uslørede trint omkring dig.

...

Herlig, ak herlig var du, o faldne sjæl!
Lys var din bolig! Ak, du erindrer det!
Dybt i dit mulm, i slangers hule,
tænker du dig de forsvundne stråler!

- 9 Se dig! Og se din hjælpeløse nøgenhed!
se dig nedbøjet under din last af ler,
udtæret af kvalm og gift, du blege
gispende genfærd af jordens hersker!

Ode til sjælen ('Ode to the Soul'), Op. 161

Text by Johannes Ewald (1743–1781)

Translated by Colin Roth

- 8 Say, o fallen, frail, and feeble,
brother of angels! Say, why do you stretch out feather
less wings? – Alas, in vain
you flutter up towards your first dwelling!

As when, the eagle's barely fledged
young one recklessly forgets its mother's call,
clammers upon the nest's rim,
tumbles, and wakes in cold shadows.

On the ant's pathway, the creeping one feels its lost emi
nence, still feels itself an eagle,
and yearns, as its noble brethren,
after your ray, you sovereign of the day!

...

Glorious, ah glorious you were, when a song of joy
awoke you, when your abiding gaze
saw the work of goodness and the wonder of wisdom
floating unveiled all around you.

...

Glorious, ah glorious you were, o fallen soul!
Bright was your home! Alas, you remember it!
Deep in your gloom, in the vipers' den,
you imagine the vanished rays!

- 9 Behold yourself! And behold your helpless nakedness!
Behold yourself bowed down beneath your burden of
clay, wasted by miasma and poison, you pale,
gasping phantom of Earth's ruler!

Se dig omspændt af snarer, bespejdet af
lurende rovdyr, tiger, og lokkende
sireners vink, og klapperslangens
gnistrende øjen, hvorved man svimler.

...

Arme nedfaldne, vågn af din stolte drøm!
Vågn! Og ydmyget under din brødes vægt
udbred din angst, og al din jammer,
sukkende for dine ønskers fader!

Da skal han ynkes over den døende
gnist af sin ånd, som ulmer på nattens bred,
da skal han redde den fra mørkets
kvælende damp, og det kolde mismod!

Arme nedfaldne, vågn af din stolte drøm!⁴

- 10 Da skal du henrykt se det, at lysets ånd
dalende spreder kærlige vinger ud,
og sitrende, vemodig, smelted
føle hans vink, og hans glæders ånde.

Svulmende af hans voksende strålers ild
skal da din lovsang stræbe at møde ham!
Og undrende skal de ufaldne
høre den helliges pris fra dybet!

Men da, o himmel! Når nu hans evige
kærligheds flamme vældig omspænder dig,
når han opløfter dig fra dybet,
op fra dit mulm, til algodheds trone.

Når du fra nådens arme, nu gysende,

See yourself encircled by snares, spied upon
by lurking predators, the tiger, and the enticing
sirens' beckoning, and the rattlesnake's
glittering eye, by which one grows dizzy.

...

O poor fallen one, awake from your proud dream!
Awake! And, humbled beneath the weight of your trespass,
spread forth your anguish, and all your lamentation,
sighing before the father of your desires!

Then shall he pity the dying
spark of his spirit, which smoulders on the shore of night,
then shall he save it from the darkness'
suffocating vapour, and the cold despair!

O poor fallen one, awake from your proud dream!⁴

- 10 Then shall you rapturously see it, that the spirit of light
descending spreads loving wings out,
and trembling, wistfully, melted,
feel his beckoning, and the breath of his joys.

Swelling with the fire of his growing rays,
your song of praise shall then strive to meet him!
And wonderingly shall the unfallen
hear the holy one's praise from the depths!

But then, o heaven! When now his eternal
flame of love powerfully embraces you,
when he lifts you from the depths,
up from your gloom to the throne of all-goodness.

When you, from the arms of grace, now shuddering,

næppe tør se det svælg, som du frelstes af!
O, da skal takkens ømme vellyst
fylde din sang og din høje harpe!

Da skal din tåre højt, som kerubers kor,
prise den ånd, som rev dig af nattens favn,
og alle himlene skal svare:
Stor er den ånd, som opløfter faldne!

scarcely dare see the abyss, from which you were saved!
O, then shall the tender delight of gratitude
fill your song and your lofty harp!

Then shall your tear, high as the cherubs' choir, praise the
spirit who lifted you from the night's embrace,
and all the heavens shall answer:
Great is the spirit who lifts up the fallen!

Notes

⁴ Line added by Holmboe

Indfrielsen

Af Thomas Michelsen

Vagn Holmboes sene korværker fra 1980'erne og 1990'erne er hovedsagelig salmer. De spænder fra *To Sarvig-salmer*, op. 154 fra 1983 over de sidste satser i motet-livsværket *Liber canticorum*, som komponisten påbegyndte i 1950'erne, til udsættelser for blandet kor af to Davids-salmer. Men der er også andre værker. Mindre kendte, men ikke mindre vigtige.

I 1989 skrev Vagn Holmboe *Winter* for sopran og 8-stemigt blandet kor. Et værk til spirituelle tekster af amerikaneren John Gracen Brown, hentet fra digtsamlingerne *A Sojourn of the Spirit* og *Passages in the Wind* fra 1981.

Allerede året efter, i 1990, fulgte Holmboe op med det store korværk *Die Erfüllung* for sopran- og barytonsolist, dobbeltkor samt træ- og messingblæsere.

Die Erfüllung, der blev Holmboes opus 183, er komponeret til uddrag af den tyske digter Novalis' *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. En ikke-færdigskrevet roman, hvor den tidlige romantikers magisk-idealistiske verdensanskuelse indbefatter så højtsvævende visioner som ophævelsen af dimensionerne tid og rum. Novalis' dunkle og fantastiske tekst med dens tale om en ny verden, tilsynekomsten af Guds ansigt i alting og et kærlighedsrige, der åbner sig, appellerede til Holmboe. Ja, det virkede efter hans udsagn fuldstændig nutidigt på ham.

Det kan lyde overraskende. Men Vagn Holmboe var en stærkt åndeligt orienteret komponist, der i den musikalske

metamorfoseteknik, han blev kendt for, oplevede at realisere altings evige forandring og genfødsel. Han mærkede sit slægtskab med Haydn som en relation til en samtidig komponist. Det kan umiddelbart lyde besynderligt, men når man som Holmboe allerede fra sine teenageår havde været fortrolig med hinduismens skrifter og overbevist om buddhistiske begreber som genfødsel og altings kosmiske enhed, er et par århundreder ingen distance.

Religiøse skrifter som det gamle *Mahabharata*-epos, der indeholder et af hinduismens mest kendte og læste skrifter, *Bhagavadgita*, stiftede han bekendtskab med som 14-årig, og at Vagn Holmboe fra en ung alder levede i en verden af 'dybe' hinduistisk og buddhistisk inspirerede sandheder, fremgår tydeligt af private breve og ikke mindst af hans dagbøger. Som når han for eksempel i begyndelsen af 1929, 19 år gammel, nedskriver følgende: "Hvorfor sker der en udvikling i selve livet – og sker der en gennem alle de mange liv, vi må gennem?"

Steiner-kongres i Skanderborg

Die Erfüllung med dets indledende messingfanfarer og rolige kontrapunktiske linjeføringer blev til på bestilling fra en antroposofisk orienteret engelsk musikerterapeut ved navn Jane Brewer. Hun arbejdede inden for Rudolf Steiner-bevægelsen og ville egentlig have bestilt et værk af Holmboes kendteste elev, Per Nørgård. Men han havde ikke tid til at tage imod opgaven, og enden på historien blev, at Holmboe komponerede et knap 20 minutter langt korværk i fire satser.

I den skikkelse blev *Die Erfüllung* uropført ved en international Steiner-kongres i Skanderborg i oktober 1990. Uropførelsen foregik som en privat opførelse i Steiner-kulturhuset Audonicons koncertsal, hvor de to solister var sopranen og

sangpædagogen Monika Mayr og barytonen og antroposofen Michael Deason-Barrow. Dertil kom et kor bestående af festivaldeltagere støttet af studerende fra musikkonservatorierne i Odense og Aarhus. Opførelsen blev ledet af den norske dirigent Holger Arden, der dengang som i dag var stærkt engageret i den antroposofiske tankegang, og som også siden opførte værket flere gange i Norge og en enkelt gang ved en Steiner-kongres i Prag.

På Brewers foranledning tilføjede Holmboe i sommeren 1993 yderligere to satser til værket, fordi hun gerne ville have mere af Novalis' tekst med. Det færdige værk har derfor seks satser og en samlet varighed på cirka 25 minutter.

At *Die Erfüllung* blev skrevet til Steiner-bevægelsen, og at værket har haft sit liv inden for rammerne af den, må betragtes som årsag til, at værket er forblevet ukendt i den brede offentlighed, hvor tekstens vidtløftighed og dunkle betydninger formentlig også ville have givet det en uforstående modtagelse. På samme måde som det var sket allerede i slutningen af 1960'erne med Holmboes lige så oversete værk *Zeit*, op. 94 for mezzosopran og strygekvartet, hvor den åndeligt orienterede, ligeledes meget vidtløftige tyske tekst er forfattet af tjecken Renata Pandula (1930-87).

Dybe kosmiske sandheder

Den østrigske filosof og esoteriker Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), der grundlagde den pædagogiske Steiner-bevægelse, skrev selv flere mysteriespil, og Novalis' romanfragment, opkaldt efter den middelalderlige tyske minnesanger Heinrich von Ofterdingen, er absolut mystisk i sit indhold.

Novalis var det kunstnernavn, den adelige digter, filosof og naturvidenskabsmand Georg Philipp Friedrich Freiherr von Hardenberg (1772-1801) publicerede under. Han var ven

med forfatteren Friedrich Schiller og filosofen Friedrich Schlegel og på alle måder en hovedskikkelse i den tidlige tyske romantik. Hans posthumt udgivne roman, der med sin ufuldstændige fragmentform lever op til romantiske idealer, viser, hvordan han tilsvarende helt i romantikkens ånd fusionerede sin optagethed af alt fra filosofi til kemi og mineralogi i ét kunstnerisk udtryk. Et udtryk, hvor kærlighed er noget universelt, der rækker langt ud over det romantiske kærlighedsbegreb, og hvor det magiske, som Novalis så det, genindtager den plads, det havde haft inden oplysningstidens rationalisme.

I denne såkaldte magiske idealismes ånd brydes sprogets og de fysiske realiteters verden ned og transcenderes, så en "wunderseltsame Zukunft" (en "vidunderligt sælsom fremtid") anes, og hvor det, der før var hverdagsagtigt, lyser "fremd und wunderbar" ("fremmed og forunderligt").

Novalis' vidtløftige ord har Holmboe valgt at introducere med festligt- alvorlige messingfanfarer. Stemmer præsenterer den nye verden i kor, inden sopransolisten som en profet fortæller, hvad der venter, når vi erkender de dybe kosmiske sandheder.

Holmboe var aldrig åben i offentligheden om sit dybt åndelige og kosmiske livssyn. Skønt han som den store danske komponist fra 1940'erne og frem gav masser af interview og præsenterede sin musik offentligt i radio, tv og ved koncerter, holdt han det, musikken udsprang af, for sig selv. Ikke desto mindre var det begreber som magi, ekstase og det kosmiske, der stod i centrum af hans måde at tænke musik på, sådan som det har vist sig, da denne forfatter fik lov at læse komponistens ikke offentliggjorte breve og dagbøger i forbindelse med arbejdet på biografien *Det dybe og det rene*, udgivet på forlaget Multivers i 2022.

Én i alt og alt i én

Holmboe responderer derfor helt naturligt på Novalis' stjer-
netåger af ord, der i *Die Erfüllung* – Indfrielsen kunne titlen
oversættes til på dansk – med “dann fliegt vor einem geheim-
men Wort das ganze verkehrte Wesen fort” (“da flyver ved ét
hemmeligt ord straks hele den forvanskede skabning bort”).

I værkets 2. del slutter barytonsolisten sig til forudsigelserne
med eventyrlige ord om en dronning, der vil vågne af en lang
søvn, “wenn Meer und Land in Liebesglut zerrinnt” (“når hav
og land opløses i kærlighedens glød”).

“Eins in allem und alles in Einen” (“Én i alt og alt i én”),
hedder det i 3. del, hvor Holmboe med sin buddhistisk
funderede livsanskuelse spontant har kunnet forstå Novalis'
vision. En vision, der svarer fint til Holmboes grundlæg-
gende erkendelse af, at “du er natur, jeg er natur, du er en
del af det træ derude, og træet er en del af dig”, som han
sagde, da han sent i livet blev interviewet til Dansk Musik-
tidsskrift og for en gangs skyld gav offentligheden et glimt
af sin livsopfattelse.

Overdrevent tekstmaleri skal man ikke lede efter i Holmboes
musik. Snarere skal man hæfte sig ved den dybere genspej-
ling af tekstens alvor og skønhed.

For Holmboe kunne musik nok udspringe af konkrete begi-
venheder eller fænomener uden for musikken selv, men
hans arbejde som komponist var at lutre den og gøre den til
ren musik. Holmboe kunne godt anerkende, at påvirkninger
udefra kunne finde vej til hans værker, men han arbejdede
grundlæggende set med organisk udvikling på baggrund af
intervaller eller korte motiver. Kim, kaldte han dem.

Kvintintervallet med dets renhed, som det bruges som slut-

interval mange steder i Holmboes oeuvre, er fremtrædende.
Når sopransolisten indleder 4. del med at synge “Die Liebe
ging auf dunkler Bahn, vom Monde nur erblickt” (“Kærlighe-
den gik ad mørke stier, kun set af månen”), og man fornem-
mer et ekko af Mahlers *Das Lied von der Erde* (1907-08),
er det en usædvanlig hentydning til en anden komponists
musik. Hvis det altså ikke er en tilfældighed.

Musikken i *Die Erfüllung* er respektfuld i overensstemmelse
med den alvor, Holmboe behandler Novalis' tekst med. Men
selv om den ikke er decideret tekstmalende, er det klart, at
den for eksempel bliver mere bevægelig i 5. del, som ind-
ledes med ordene “Die Fabel fängt zu spinnen an” (“Fablen
begynder at tage form”). Efter at 6. og sidste del har afrun-
det visionen af en epoke, hvor “Zahlen und Figuren” (“tal og
figurer”) ikke længere er “Schlüssel aller Kreaturen” (“nøglen
til alt levende”), minder blæserne om det fanfareagtige motiv
fra værkets begyndelse.

Altid det omskiftelige

Da dirigenten Mogens Dahl og Mogens Dahl Kammerkor
besluttede sig for at opføre og indspille *Die Erfüllung*, ledte
vi efter andre Holmboe-værker, der kunne supplere det ved
koncerten. Valget faldt på *Song at Sunset* og *Ode til sjælen*.
Intet af de to værker har været særlig kendt eller opført, men
begge røber ligesom *Die Erfüllung* Vagn Holmboes stærke
optagethed af eksistensen og det åndelige.

Song at Sunset med opusnummeret 138b er fra 1978. Det
er komponeret for blandet kor til en tekst af den amerikanske
digter, journalist og forfatter Walt Whitman (1819-92),
som Holmboe havde lånt ord fra, allerede da han i begyn-
delsen af årtiet skrev sin 10. symfoni. Det var Whitmans digt
med den græske titel *Eidólons* (1876), han valgte strofer fra
som forord til symfonien. Fordi de passede til hans buddhi-

stisk prægede livssyn og hans visioner om det at komponere som en stadig kamp for at skabe kosmos ud af kaos. Oversat til dansk kunne digtets linjer blandt andet lyde: "Altid det omskiftelige, Altid materialer, skiftende, smuldrende, gen-helende".

I *Song at Sunset* er det synet af en solnedgang, der fylder digterens hals med luft og åbner hans mund til en panteistisk lovprisning af perfektionen i kosmos og "mysteriet om bevægelse i alle væsener". Ligesom i flerbindskorværket *Liber canticorum* viser Holmboe her sit mesterskab, når det kommer til vokalpolyfoni, i en bølgende, stemningsmæssigt omskiftelig firstemmig sats, hvor stemmegrupper på skift deler sig og gør satsen fyldigere og sanselig.

Hvor *Song at Sunset* er ren acappella-polyfoni, er *Ode til sjælen*, opus 161, skrevet for blandet kor med messingseks-tet og orgel. Holmboe komponerede det omfattende værk lige inden sin sidste fuldendte strygekvartet, nr. 20, *Notturno*, over den romantiske danske digter Johannes Ewalds *Til Sielen. En Ode*.

Foruden kor har Holmboe komponeret for to vokalsolister ad libitum, en sopran og en tenor. Det lokale Frederiksborg Amtsmusikudvalg i Nordsjælland, hvor Holmboe boede de sidste mange år af sit liv, havde bestilt et korværk, og komponisten valgte at give amatørkorsangerne i Frederiksborg Kammerkor og Helsingør Kammerkor en seriøs udfordring, da de i november 1986 skulle uropføre resultatet i Frederiksborg Slotskirke som del af en ren Holmboekonzert. Brugen af orgel og messing skyldtes, at *Ode til sjælen* blev opført sammen med *Contrasti* for orgel samt den anden af Holmboes to messingkvintetter.

Ligesom Whitman finder 1700-talsdigteren Ewald sin inspi-

ration i naturen – her blandt dyr fra fugle til rovdyr og slanger – når han skal forklare, hvordan kun Guds "kærligheds flamme" kan løfte den menneskelige sjæl med dens "fjerløse vinger" op fra "det ler", den kryber i, så den kan svinge sig op til englene, hvor den kommer fra.

Holmboes tonesprog er karakteristisk nok uden forbehold i sin karske strenghed. Johannes Ewalds romantiske tekst virker på den baggrund ekstra svulstig sammenlignet med Whitmans, der på en eller anden måde klarer at beskrive noget lige så vidtløftigt med ord, man ikke på samme måde snubler over. Men begge tekster handler om det ultimative i form af det åndelige. Og for Holmboe er det typisk, at noget, der for mange kan virke gammeldags og højtravende, på ham virkede samtidigt og naturligt.

Glemte og gemte grundigt væk

Vagn Holmboe har været oplevet som en nordisk komponist i traditionen fra Carl Nielsen, selv om faktum er, at han havde et syn på sin store forgængers musik, der udviklede sig fra det decideret negative til det nuancerede. Fordi han offentligt forholdt sig stort set tavs om, hvordan hans kunst- og virkelighedssyn var funderet i østlig religion og filosofi, har hovedværket på dette album, *Die Erfüllung*, indtil nu slet ikke været en del af vores billede af Vagn Holmboe og hans musikalske værk. På samme måde som Zeit er det blevet glemt og gemt grundigt væk.

Holmboes kammermusik – ikke mindst i form af de mere end 20 mesterlige strygekvartetter – har sammen med de 13 symfonier, de symfoniske metamorfoser og korkompendiet *Liber canticorum* i stedet fået lov at tage opmærksomheden. I øvrigt også fra det faktum, at komponisten i 1950'erne og 1960'erne forholdt sig kreativt til modernismens tolvtonemusik, tilfældighedskomposition og serialisme.

Det ses i mange sammenhænge, at Vagn Holmboe var tilbøjelig til at realisere sine idéer i form af værk-par eller søsterværker. Blandt de mest kendte eksempler er nok hans soloværker for henholdsvis guitar og akkordeon. Vælger man at betragte *Zeit* fra slutningen af 1960'erne og *Die Erfüllung* fra begyndelsen af 1990'erne som et sådant søskendepar, ses tilbøjeligheden her udfoldet i form af to 'dybe' åndelige, tekstbaserede værker, hvor teksten er præsenteret vokalt – det ene ledsaget af fire strygere, det andet af ni blæsere. Begge røber en komponist, hvis musik i hans egen opfattelse var intet mindre end en realisering af det kosmiske og altings konstante forandring.

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Thomas Michelsen har i tre årtier skrevet om klassisk musik og er i dag musikredaktør på Politiken. Han er cand.mag. i musikvidenskab og filosofihistorie og udkom i 2022 med den første biografi om Vagn Holmboe, Det dybe og det rene (Multivers).

Den tyske sopran **Kathrin Lorenzen** voksede op nær Flensborg og indledte sin musikalske løbebane med kirkemusikstudier. Hun var tidligt aktiv i ensembler som World Youth Choir og Kammerchor Stuttgart, før hun fokuserede fuldt ud på sangen. Efter studier i Saarbrücken flyttede hun i 2021 til Stockholm, hvor hun i dag er fast medlem af Sveriges Radios Kor. Sideløbende har hun markeret sig stærkt som solist; i 2023 vandt hun 1. prisen ved den internationale Telemannkonkurrence i Magdeburg. Hun dyrker kammermusikken intensivt, især i sin faste duo med pianisten Oskar Ekberg, hvor de udvikler nye koncertformater. Kathrin Lorenzen er desuden medlem af Mogens Dahl Kammerkor.

Sopranen **Jihye Kim** er født i Sydkorea, hvor hun blev uddannet ved Seoul National University, før hun rejste til Italien og færdiggjorde sine studier ved Santa Cecilia-konservatoriet i Rom i 2008. Hun har vundet adskillige priser i internationale konkurrencer, herunder Benvenuto Franci og Vincenzo Bellini-prisen. I 2013 flyttede hun til Tyskland og sang i prestigefyldte kor som RIAS Kammerchor og Leipzig Rundfunkchor. Siden 2015 har hun været ansat i DR Vokalensemblet, og hun er desuden medlem af Mogens Dahl Kammerkor.

Den engelske tenor og komponist **Nils Greenhow** er uddannet fra York University i 2012. I England har han sunget med fremtrædende ensembler som Choir of Westminster Abbey, London Voices og St Martin's Voices. Hans tilknytning til Danmark begyndte i 2016, da han med blot én dags varsel sprang til ved en koncert med Mogens Dahl Kammerkor, som han siden har været fast medlem af. Han bosatte sig i Danmark fire år senere og har sunget med Ars Nova og Musica Ficta. Siden 2022 har han været tenor i DR Vokalensemblet. Ved siden af sangerkarrieren er han en efterspurgt korkomponist.

Den engelske baryton **René Bloice-Sanders** begyndte sin karriere som kordreng i Canterbury Cathedral. Han er uddannet fra University of Nottingham og Royal Academy of Music i London, hvor han dimitterede med udmærkelse og modtog Nora Carstairs Bland Award. På operascenen har han sunget roller som Figaro, Eugene Onegin og Marcello hos kompagnier som The Grange Festival, Garsington Opera og Wexford Festival Opera. Hans koncertrepertoire spænder vidt fra Bachs passioner til romantiske værker, og han har nået semifinalen i konkurrencen Opera By Voice Alone. René Bloice-Sanders er medlem af Mogens Dahl Kammerkor.

Den københavnske blæserkvintet **V Coloris** forener musikere med forskellige nationaliteter og kulturelle baggrunde – en mangfoldighed, der afspejles i ensemblets navn, som understreger rigdommen af farver og udtryk. Kvintettens kunstneriske virke hviler på to hovedsøjler: folkemusik og nykomponeret musik. Med udgangspunkt i traditionelle melodier skaber de ofte egne arrangementer af værker med folkelige rødder og udforsker nye klanglige og udtryksmæssige muligheder inden for blæserkvintettens ramme. V Coloris samarbejder jævnligt med fremtrædende komponister som Doina Rotaru, Karin Rehnqvist, Hans Abrahamsen, Mette Nielsen og Lil Lacy og er engageret i at bestille og opføre ny musik, der udvider repertoiret og taler til det moderne publikum. Som initiativtagere til koncertrækker og tværkunstneriske projekter arbejder de aktivt for at nå ud til publikum i alle aldre gennem fantasifulde programmer og samarbejder på tværs af kunstarter.

Mogens Dahl Kammerkor har siden 2006 været synonym med kormusik af højeste kvalitet. I ensemblet udvælges de medvirkende til hvert projekt ud fra en større pulje af omkring 40 sangere fra Skandinavien, Tyskland og Eng-

land, der sammensættes afhængigt af repertoire og format. Grundstammen i korets repertoire er den nordiske a capella-tradition, og kærligheden til den nordiske korlyd og sprogtoner er dokumenteret på en række indspilninger. Målet er at påvirke den fremtidige dagsorden for nordisk vokalmusik og søge nye veje gennem kunstneriske samarbejder. Koret optræder ofte med nykomponerede værker af etablerede nordiske komponister, hvoraf mange er skrevet specielt til ensemblet. Blandt disse er Sven-David Sandström, der var korets 'composer in residence' fra 2014-19, og som har dedikeret et antal store værker til koret, og Per Gunnar Pettersen, der er korets nuværende 'composer in residence'.

Mogens Dahl Kammerkor har stående samarbejder med forskellige ensembler, blandt andet med Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment om årlige opførelser af Händels *Messias* i København. Højdepunkter fra de seneste 20 år inkluderer blandt andet en koncert i DR Koncertsal med sopranen Anna Netrebko (2009), uropførelsen af *Nordic Mass* af Sven-David Sandström på Festspillene i Bergen (2014) og verdenspremieren på hans *The Passion of St John* i Konzerthaus Berlin (2016), indspillet filmmusik til filmen *De frivillige* (2019) og verdenspremieren på Missy Mazzolis *Year of Our Burning* på Festspillene i Bergen (2022).

Organisten **Jakob Lorentzen** er uddannet fra Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium som elev af Hans Fagius, Amalie Malling og Dan-Olof Stenlund. Han supplerede sin uddannelse ved Pariskonservatoriet, hvor han studerede klaver, improvisation og orgel i solistklassen hos Susan Landale, hvilket han afsluttede med "Prix de virtuosité" i 1995. Siden 1997 har han været organist og kantor ved Holmens Kirke og Christiansborg Slotskirke i København. Lorentzen har ledet flere vokalensembler, og i 2005 stiftede han Holmens Vokalensemble, der specialiserer sig i tidlig vokalmusik.

Mogens Dahl er dirigent og grundlægger af Mogens Dahl Kammerkor, som han har udviklet til at være et af Skandinavens førende vokalensembler i dag. Han er uddannet fra Musikvidenskabeligt Institut på Aarhus Universitet og fra Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium suppleret med studier hos blandt andre Eric Ericson og Jorma Panula. Han har i en årrække undervist ved Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium i Aarhus og på Aalborg Universitet. Fra 1991-2003 var han syngemester på Den Jyske Opera.

En lang række af Mogens Dahls projekter tager udgangspunkt i nyskrevne værker, tilegnet ham og kammerkoret af førende skandinaviske komponister. Hans visionære arbejde med nordisk vokalmusik har ført til opsigtsvækkende samarbejder med komponister og musikere på tværs af vante genreskel. Gennem flere år har Mogens Dahl desuden dirigeret London-ensemblet Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment i forbindelse med Mogens Dahl Kammerkors årlige Messias-koncerter i Holmens Kirke.



Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir

Soprano

Jihye Kim

Kathrin Lorenzen

Isabella Gibber

Eleonora Poignant

Signe Haugaard Lauridsen

Alto

Christopher Mitchell

Fanny Kempe

Lone Mahaut Grønnum

Samuel Mitchell

Tenor

Nils Greenhow

Ed Woodhouse

Joar Sörensson

Jonathan Kroner Ingvald

Bass

Leon Reimer

René Bloice-Sanders

Didier Linder

Jonas Törnqvist

Johan Karlström

Recorded live at Holmens Kirke, Copenhagen, on 5 November 2023

Recording producer: Bent Grønholdt (DR P2)

Engineering: Peter Bo Nielsen (DR P2)

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The Fulfilment, by Thomas Michelsen, translated from the Danish by Colin Roth. Lyrics translated from the German and Danish by Colin Roth and from the English by Jens Povlsen. Note that the translations attempt to convey the content and feel of the original poems, which does not necessarily mean that they can replace the originals in performances of the songs.

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