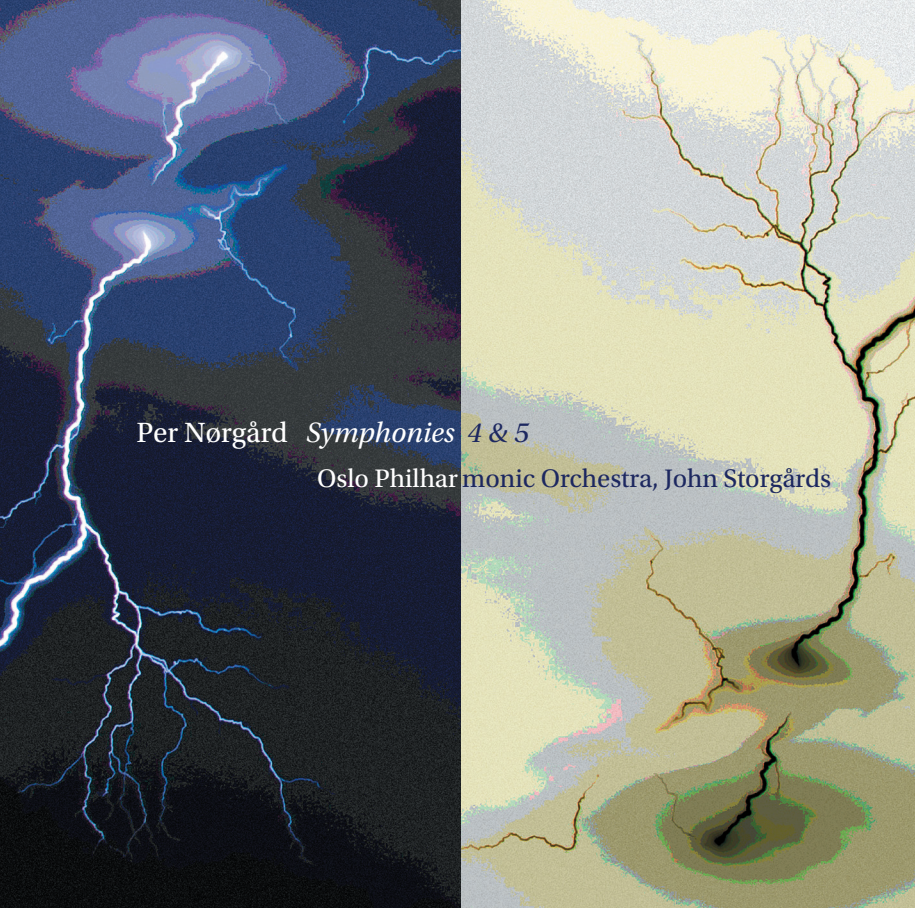




Per Nørgård *Symphonies 4 & 5*

Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, John Storgårds



Per Nørgård

Per Nørgård (b. 1932)

Symphonies 4 & 5

Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra

John Storgårds, conductor

	Symphony No. 5 (1987-90; rev. 1991)	36:14
1	Moderato – più allegro –	11:20
2	Allegro feroce –	6:23
3	Andante –	3:50
4	Lento – Quasi una passacaglia –	3:54
5	Allegro robusto	10:47
	Symphony No. 4 (1981)	19:38
6	“Indischer Roosen-Gaarten” –	12:40
7	“Chineesischer Hexen-See”	6:58

TOTAL: 55:52

Dacapo is supported by the Danish Arts Foundation **DANISH ARTS FOUNDATION**

The first time I came into contact with Per Nørgård's music must have been in connection with the Nordic Music Days festival, back in the 1980s, while I was performing in many of those festivals as a violinist. Back then, I didn't perform any music of his, but I heard various things, for example choral pieces, that somehow grabbed me. I also studied a bit of composing in those days, which of course made me a concentrated listener and a searcher for inspiration.

Later on, also in connection with one of those same festivals, I learned one of his pieces properly as a still fairly inexperienced conductor. I was asked to conduct *Constellations* for 12 solo strings with the Finnish Avanti! Chamber Orchestra, for which I was concertmaster in those days. I realized then that I was dealing with a quite fascinating, unique and demanding composer.

The definitive point when Per Nørgård became really important to me was during the Avanti! Orchestra's 14th Summer Sound Festival in 1999 in Borgå, Finland. The conductor Jukka-Pekka Saraste was the artistic director of this festival. I was personally involved in organizing Per Nørgård's period as 'composer in residence' for that year's festival and was accordingly involved with numerous performances of his music, both as a violinist and conductor. I will never forget the intense late night rehearsal sessions as leader of the Avanti! String Quartet, in a sports hall with Per Nørgård himself present, so inspirationally supervising our work on his 7th and 8th string quartets. The main piece by him which I conducted at the same festival was his wonderfully tricky and exciting Piano Concerto *In due tempi* with Per Salo as soloist.

I had now become a big fan of Per Nørgård and we also became friends. Having been in touch with his music regularly ever since, I just happened to call him exactly at the right time some years ago. I wanted to ask him to compose an orchestral work for a world premiere with the Helsinki Philharmonic with myself as chief conductor. This led to a visit to his lovely home in Copenhagen and to the commissioning of his 8th Symphony. What a masterpiece it is! As a dedicatee of the work and having had the privilege of conducting its world premiere in Helsinki with the composer present, this will forever remain one of the main highlights in my life as a musician. The private readings of the symphony with Nørgård alone – first of his own



manuscript at his piano and later of the full score just before the final editing and the world premiere – were equally great, unique and very special moments between just him and me.

And now, recording his Symphonies Nos. 2, 4, 5 and 6 with the great Oslo Philharmonic and the brilliant producer Preben Iwan has been like a continuation of a beautiful dream for me. The recordings in May and June 2015 of these four symphonies were simply excellent sessions, with fully committed, focused and wonderful people. In addition, knowing his 7th Symphony very well (I conducted its British premiere at the BBC Proms) and the 1st and 3rd symphonies as a listener and score reader, I can say without any doubt that for me, Nørgård is the greatest symphonist of our time. All his symphonies are individual, concentrated masterpieces. Every single one has its totally distinctive, crystal-clear logic, differing from the others in a way that only Sibelius' symphonies, before Nørgård's, do. There are also other similarities to discover. More about that another time.

John Storgårds, 2016

Per Nørgård's works stem from an insatiable urge to explore the phenomena of the world and the possibilities of music. His list of works is huge – over 400 of them – and the eight symphonies stand as pillars of his production. They are milestones along the course of 60 years and the range, from the gloomy Nordic Symphony No. 1 to the ethereal Symphony No. 8, is simply vast. Perhaps only Nørgård's Nordic predecessor Sibelius has to the same extent composed symphonies of such great variety.

Indeed, Nørgård has always had a close relationship with Sibelius, but it is by no means imitation of his music that constitutes the influence. "What I think has been the most profound lesson from studying Sibelius' symphonies is the extent to which each of the works is really in a class by itself. This permeates my own attitude to composing symphonies. I feel each of my symphonies is a whole continent in itself," Nørgård has said.

Symphony No. 5

Symphony No. 5 was given its first performance in 1990 by Esa-Pekka Salonen (to whom it is dedicated) and the Danish National Symphony Orchestra in a concert where the rest of the programme was the fifth symphonies of Sibelius and Carl Nielsen. More than the number five and the Nordic element connects the works: for each of the three composers the fifth symphony was a breakthrough after a crisis. In the 1980s Nørgård had been through a period when chaos shattered his holistic world-picture. The greatly polarized Symphony No. 4 is a central work from those years. But with his Symphony No. 5 Nørgård showed with supreme courage that he could look all the chaotic forces in the eye however violent they might be.

The mighty work has an unprecedentedly powerful expressive force. From the beginning of the symphony Nørgård shows that he dares go to the edge of the volcano with an awareness that he can face it. The forces of nature are not tamed, for control and chaos exist at the same time in this music – two opposites in what otherwise seems an impossible embrace.

Nørgård takes the view that it is up to the listener to decide on the number of 'movements' in the symphony. It can be perceived with the contours of a traditional symphonic form with

a large dynamic first movement, a quick second movement, a slow section (or two) and in the end an unstoppable, wildly rushing final movement. But it can just as easily be heard as one great development of the dynamism set in motion by the innumerable eruptions of the music at the beginning. The dynamic upsurges are intense and irregular, as if they come from an unpredictable geyser or a bubbling sea of lava. And the silence between the eruptions is full of powerful tension, for what will the next phase be like?

The second section is typified by quivering spasms in the strings and grotesque manifestations in the woodwinds, which among other things play on loose reeds. The beginning of 'Jingle Bells' even pops up from the material as an *objet trouvé*, and the dynamic cascades reach absurd heights. Nørgård refuses actually to call this section a 'scherzo', but it is certainly a burlesque world that the symphony has developed into here.

The third section builds up to yet another eruption of cascades, after which a chaconne-like foundation is firmly laid. The subsequent development comes close to running amok, and after a final culmination the music falls calm and fades out. But it is too early to write off the activity of the forces of nature. Like the awakening of a slumbering dragon the discharges of energy break out in the last section and the billowing cascades are once more in full flow. In the concluding minutes the ecstatic fanfares are transformed into a manic version of the end of Nørgård's own First Symphony, written 35 years previously. After which it is all swept away as by the wave of a magic wand.

In the symphony Per Nørgård has developed his technique with the infinity series into a complex system he calls "tone lakes". The principle does not, like the infinity series, form fractal repetitions, but opens up tonal material that has developed from 12 notes to 36, 108 etc. For Nørgård it was a natural development to abandon the well tried principle of the infinity series. "Techniques are quite simply modalities, tools for achieving results. They must be refined – or abandoned if they become too restrictive," he said. And if there is music without irksome fetters it is decidedly this Fifth Symphony, where Nørgård juggles all the balls in the air at the same time.

"That has been the fascinating and frightening thing about composing the work," Nørgård explained. "How long can it go on? Where it is going? Since something has always been going on, while something else is in the making, you experience a constant restlessness."

Symphony No. 4

Symphony No. 4 comes from a period when Nørgård shattered the visions of a cosmos in harmony that he had presented in his Second and Third Symphonies. The main reason was his encounter with the Swiss artist Adolf Wölfl (1864-1930). For most of his life Wölfl was a patient in a mental hospital, where he created thousands of texts, images and musical fragments which with their intense creativity give the impression of a split personality. In his layer-on-layer art swarming with details and perspectives Nørgård could recognize himself – just with the poles reversed: the dark side with chaos and agitation instead of system-building according to a natural order.

“I knew that this was a liberating moment,” Nørgård said about the encounter with Wölfl’s art, speaking at the Louisiana Museum of Art at Humlebæk, Denmark, in the autumn of 1979. Wölfl’s chaos became a direction indicator for Nørgård in a period that can reasonably be called his crisis years. The first work was the three choral songs *Wie ein Kind* to texts by Wölfl. Other major works from the period are the opera *The Divine Circus* and Symphony No. 4, which for many of Nørgård’s adherents were a surprising and perhaps also disappointing break with the intoxicating world-harmonies of the preceding works. But amidst all the Gothic horror Nørgård found a new rhythmic dynamic that took him a long way in the course of the following years – now with the focus on the misfit and the loner, including himself. “Irreconcilability is my position today, and that can hardly be called a classic doctrine,” Nørgård said in an interview in 1982.

In 1912 Wölfl had laid plans for a musical work with the title *Indischer Roosen-Gaarten und Chinesischer Hexen-See* (*Indian Rose Garden and Chinese Witch Lake*). For obvious reasons it was not realized, but the title alone was enough for Nørgård. “Such precision in the expression of polarity is rare,” as he remarked. The result was the closest Nørgård has come to a programme symphony: the symphony Wölfl himself never managed to write. The subtitle is *Hommage à Adolf Wölfl*, and Per Nørgård has aptly spoken of it as “a handshake with a friend, with thanks for a good idea.”

The symphony constitutes a balance of oppositions. There are two movements – the rose garden and the witch lake – each of which involves something of its own opposite. Nørgård compares it to the yin and yang symbol, which has a black eye in the white ‘fish’ and a white eye in the black one.

The first movement begins on the foundation of a melody Nørgård had written for Wölfl’s poem *Abendlied* (Evening Song). The words of the song, *Traulichem, Alleine sein* (“Sad it is to be alone”) form a descending motif that is transferred here to the violins and takes on disintegrating, collapsing forms – in fact, quite peacefully, but with an unreal calm. We are in a sanctuary – for something. The second part of the movement builds on the birdsong motif of the African robin-chat, which is first manifested softly in the piccolo and then in the solo violin. It is the most important theme of the symphony. Nørgård took the broad view of the fact that the bird is neither Indian nor Chinese – it was the musical qualities that counted. “The theme fascinates me, because it has something that goes beyond any system, it so to speak contains the existential, paradox of joy and sorrow.” The ambivalence becomes all the more striking when Nørgård lets the theme spread to the brass and the dark woodwinds. That is when we experience “the black eye in the white fish.”

The transition from the rose garden in the first movement to the witch lake in the second is quite abrupt. “It is the rest of us who are mad if we do not know that we are living atop a catastrophe every second,” Nørgård has explained, and now the catastrophe breaks forth without warning. From the first note the witch lake has fiery, warlike rhythms. The unreality has become hair-raisingly horrific. Quotations from foreign music appear in the development of the music. The old salon waltz *Fascination*, known from Mantovani’s saccharine orchestra, penetrates into the brass in a grotesque version. Crazy Swiss *Ländler* music breaks out, an echo of another Wölfl song by Nørgård. The falling thirds of the melody even have something in common with the “inextinguishable” theme from Carl Nielsen’s Fourth Symphony, another symphony that is a life-crisis work with conflict and irreconcilability as a bearing principle.

Relentlessly we are brought to the brink of the burning water of the witch lake when, at the ultimate cliffhanger moment, we hear a new opening. The five last notes of the symphony are a small glimpse of the birdsong motif. A sensation of the rose garden that has been there all the time. The white eye in the black fish.

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OSLO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA was founded in 1919 and is today the national orchestra in Norway. In Oslo it gives 60 to 70 symphonic concerts on a yearly basis, including Christmas concerts and school concerts, chamber concerts and open air concerts free of charge with tens of thousands attending. The orchestra has its own programs and projects for young listeners and musicians under the label 'Ung arena' and 'Crescendo'. With Mariss Jansons, Music Director 1979–2002, the orchestra achieved great international fame. Touring activities from 1982 and on included regular visits at most of the major venues in Europe, such as a residency at Vienna Musikverein, festivals at BBC Proms, Edinburgh, Lucerne and Salzburg and as well as major venues in the Americas and East Asia. Jansons was succeeded by André Previn, who also headed tours in Europe and the USA. During the period from 2007 to 2013 with Jukka-Pekka Saraste, today Honorary Conductor, the orchestra visited, among other places, the great music centres of London (BBC Proms included), Vienna, Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt and Paris. Vasily Petrenko began as Chief Conductor in 2013. His concerts in Oslo are considered among the highlights in the city, and abroad he and the Philharmonic have been a sought-after unit for long. So far, touring has taken them to Vienna, Berlin, Paris, the BBC Proms, the Edinburgh Festival, Toshiba Grand Concerts in Japan, Germany, Spain and Great Britain. The 2016–17 season includes planned visits to Germany, Switzerland, Austria, South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Petrenko's first recording with the Philharmonic was released on LAWO Classics in 2015: Scriabin's Symphonies Nos. 3 and 4 (LWC1088). In 2016–17 are scheduled Prokofiev's complete *Romeo and Juliet*, Scriabin's other symphonies and his piano concerto, as well as the start of a Richard Strauss cycle.

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Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic as well as Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, **John Storgårds** is also Artistic Director of the Lapland Chamber Orchestra, and he was Chief Conductor of Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra from 2008-2015. Maintaining a dual career as a conductor and violin virtuoso, John Storgårds is widely recognised for his creative flair for programming traditional, rare and contemporary music in his performances. As a guest conductor he appears with orchestras such as the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, Bamberger Symphoniker, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, BBC Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Further afield he appears with Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra and major North American orchestras in Cincinnati, St. Louis, Washington DC, Boston, Toronto, Montreal, Cleveland and New York. He has won particular acclaim for his interpretations of works by Sibelius and Nielsen, and his repertoire also includes all the symphonies by Beethoven, Brahms, Bruckner, Mozart, Schubert, and Schumann. His commitment to discovering new or unknown repertoire has resulted in many world premiere performances of music by Brett Dean, Kaija Saariaho, Per Nørgård, Korngold, and even Sibelius, amongst many others. He is an active chamber musician at festivals, not least at the Avanti! Chamber Orchestra's annual Summer Sounds, and appears frequently as a solo violinist with international orchestras. John Storgårds has recorded numerous CDs. For Dacapo he has released, among others, Vagn Holmboe's chamber symphonies and chamber music by Sunleif Rasmussen, both with Lapland Chamber Orchestra. His vast discography showcases his repertoire interests with numerous award-winning recordings with many different orchestras, not least the Helsinki Philharmonic. His recording of Kalevi Aho's concertos for theremin and for horn received an *ECHO Klassik* Award in 2015. A recording of Pëteris Vasks's Second Symphony and Violin Concerto, featuring him as soloist, received the *Cannes Classical Disc of the Year* Award in 2004 and his Rautavaara disc with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra won a *Gramophone* Award in 2012. John Storgårds studied violin, composition, and conducting at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, and violin even with Chaim Taub in Israel. He received the Finnish State Prize for Music in 2002.

johnstorgards.com



John Storgårds

Første gang jeg var i kontakt med Per Nørgårds musik må have været i forbindelse med festivalen Nordiske Musikdage, tilbage i 1980'erne, mens jeg optrådte på flere af disse festivaler som violinist. Dengang spillede jeg ikke noget af hans musik, men jeg hørte forskellige ting, for eksempel nogle korværker, som på en eller anden måde greb mig. Jeg studerede også en smule komposition på den tid, hvilket selvfølgelig gjorde mig til en koncentreret lytter, som søgte efter inspiration.

Senere, i forbindelse med en af disse festivaler, lærte jeg et af hans værker at kende ordentligt, stadig som en rimeligt uerfaren dirigent. Jeg blev bedt om at dirigere *Konstellationer* for 12 solostrygere med det finske Avanti! Kammerorkester, som jeg var koncertmester for dengang. Da blev jeg klar over, at jeg havde at gøre med en ret så fascinerende, unik og krævende komponist.

Det afgørende punkt, hvor Per Nørgård virkelig blev vigtig for mig, var under Avanti!-orkestrets 14. *Summer Sound Festival* i 1999 i Borgå, Finland. Dirigenten Jukka-Pekka Saraste var kunstnerisk leder af festivalen. Jeg blev personligt involveret i at organisere Per Nørgårds periode som huskomponist for det års festival og blev følgelig involveret i talrige fremførelser af hans musik, både som violinist og som dirigent. Jeg glemmer aldrig de intense sene aftenprøver som førsteviolinist i Avanti! String Quartet i en idrætshal, hvor Per Nørgård selv var tilstede og på en meget inspirerende måde overværede vores arbejde med hans 7. og 8. strygekvartet. Det hovedværk af ham, som jeg dirigerede på samme festival, var hans fantastisk udviklede og spændende klaverkoncert *In Due Tempi* med Per Salo som solist.

Jeg var nu blevet en stor fan af Per Nørgård, og vi blev også venner. Efter jævnlige at have været i kontakt med hans musik siden da, kom jeg tilfældigvis til at ringe til ham på det helt rigtige tidspunkt for nogle år siden. Jeg ville bede ham om at komponere et orkesterværk til uropførelse med Helsinki Filharmonikerne med mig selv som chefdirigent. Dette førte til et besøg i hans smukke hjem i København og til bestillingen på hans 8. symfoni. Sikke et mesterværk det er! Som den, værket er tilegnet, og med det privilegium at skulle dirigere det til uropførelsen i Helsinki mens komponisten var tilstede, vil jeg altid huske dette som en af de største højdepunkter i mit liv som musiker. De private gennemgange af symfonien med

Nørgård alene – først af hans eget manuskript ved hans klaver og senere af det fulde partitur lige inden den sidste redigering og uropførelsen – var lige fantastiske, unikke og meget særlige øjeblikke mellem kun ham og mig.

Og nu, hvor vi optager symfonierne nr. 2, 4, 5 og 6 med de pragtfulde Oslo Filharmonikere og den strålende producer Preben Iwan, har det været som en fortsættelse af en smuk drøm for mig. Optagelserne i maj og juni 2015 af disse fire symfonier var ganske enkelt fremragende, med helt engagerede, fokuserede og fantastiske mennesker. Desuden, når jeg nu kender hans 7. Symfoni så godt (jeg dirigerede dens britiske premiere til *The BBC Proms*) og den 1. og 3. Symfoni som lytter og partiturlæser, kan jeg sige, uden nogen tvivl, at for mig er Nørgård vor tids største symfoniker. Alle hans symfonier er selvstændige, koncentrerede mesterværker. Hver eneste af dem har sin egen karakteristiske, krystallklare logik, og adskiller sig fra de andre på en måde, som kun Sibelius' symfonier har gjort det før Nørgårds. Der er også andre fælles-træk at finde. Mere om det en anden gang.

John Storgårds, 2016

Per Nørgårds værker udspringer af en uudslukkelig trang til at undersøge verdens fænomener og musikkens muligheder. Hans værkliste er kæmpemæssig – over 400 værker – og de otte symfonier står som søjler i hans produktion. De er milepæle, sat gennem 60 år, og spændet fra den dystre, nordiske Symfoni nr. 1 til den æteriske Symfoni nr. 8 er simpelthen enormt. Måske er det kun Nørgårds nordiske forgænger Sibelius, der på samme måde har komponeret symfonier af så stor forskellighed.

Nørgård har da også altid haft et meget tæt forhold til Sibelius, men det er slet ikke en efterligning af hans musik, der udgør påvirkningen. “Det jeg tror, har været den dybeste lære af at studere Sibelius’ symfonier er, i hvor høj grad hvert af værkerne virkelig er noget helt for sig. Det gennemsyrrer mit eget forhold til at komponere symfonier. Hver af mine symfonier føler jeg som et helt kontinent for sig”, har Nørgård sagt.

Symfoni nr. 5

Symfoni nr. 5 blev uropført i 1990 af Esa-Pekka Salonen (som den er tilegnet) og DR Symfoni-orkestret ved en koncert, hvor resten af programmet var 5. Symfoni af Sibelius og af Carl Nielsen. Der er andet end femtallet og det nordiske, der forbinder værkerne. For alle tre komponister gælder det, at deres 5. Symfoni er et gennembrud efter en krise. I 1980’erne havde Nørgård været gennem en periode, hvor kaos splittede hans holistiske verdensbillede. Den stærkt polariserede Symfoni nr. 4 er et centralt værk fra de år. Men med sin Symfoni nr. 5 viste Nørgård med suverænt mod, at han kunne se alle kaotiske kræfter i øjnene, hvor voldsomme de end måtte være.

Det mægtige værk har en uhørt stærk udtrykskraft. Fra begyndelsen af symfonien viser Nørgård, at han tør gå på kanten af vulkanen med bevidsthed om at kunne klare det. Naturkræfterne bliver ikke tæmmet, for kontrol og kaos eksisterer samtidigt i denne musik. To modsætninger i et tilsyneladende ellers umuligt favntag.

Efter Nørgårds mening er det op til lytteren at afgøre antallet af “satser” i symfonien. Den kan opfattes i omridset af en traditionel symfonisk form med en stor dynamisk førstesats, en hurtig 2. sats, en (eller to) langsomme dele og til sidst en ustopkelig, vildt jagende finale. Men

den kan lige så vel høres som én stor udvikling af den dynamik, musikkens utallige eruptioner i begyndelsen sætter i gang. De dynamiske udbrud er voldsomme og uregelmæssige, som kom de fra en utilregnelig gejser eller en boblende lavasø. Og stilheden mellem udbruddene er fuld af stærk spænding, for hvordan bliver mon den næste fase?

2. del er præget af sitrende spasmer i strygerne og groteske fremtrædener hos træblæserne, der bl.a. spiller på løse mundstykker. Begyndelsen af “Jingle Bells” dukker sågar frem af materialet som et *objet trouvé*, og de dynamiske kaskader når absurde højder. Nørgård vogter sig for ligefrem at kalde dette afsnit en “scherzo”, men det er bestemt en burlesk verden, symfonien her har udviklet sig til.

3. del bygger op til endnu et kaskadeudbrud, hvorefter et chaconne-lignende fundament lægger sig fast. Den følgende udvikling er nær ved at løbe ud af kontrol, og efter en sidste kulmination falder musikken sammen i en hendøen. Men det er for tidligt at afskrive naturkræfternes aktivitet. Som en slumrende drage, der vækkes, bryder energiudfoldelserne ud i sidste del, og de bølgende kaskader er igen i fuld udfoldelse. I de afsluttende minutter forvandler de ekstatiske fanfarer sig til en manisk version af slutningen fra Nørgårds egen 1. Symfoni, skrevet 35 år tidligere. Hvorefter det hele med et trylleslag fejers væk.

Per Nørgård har i symfonien udviklet sin teknik med uendelighedsrækkerne til et komplekst system, han benævner tonesøer. Princippet danner ikke ligesom uendelighedsrækken fraktale gentagelser, men åbner for et tonemateriale, der udvikler sig fra 12 toner til 36, 108 osv. For Nørgård var det en naturlig udvikling at forlade uendelighedsrækkens velafprøvede princip. “Teknikker er netop modaliteter, redskaber til at opnå resultater. De må forfines – eller forlades hvis de bliver for snærende”, sagde han. Og hvis der findes musik uden snærende bånd, er det da afgjort denne 5. Symfoni, hvor Nørgård holder alle bolde i luften samtidig.

“Det har været det fascinerende og skræmmende ved at komponere værket”, forklarede Nørgård. “Hvor længe kan det blive ved? Hvor fører det hen? Eftersom der hele tiden er noget i gang, mens noget andet bliver til, oplever man en konstant uro.”

Symfoni nr. 4, Indischer Roosen-Gaarten und Chinesischer Hexen-See

Symfoni nr. 4 stammer fra en periode, hvor Nørgård nedbrød de visioner om et kosmos i harmoni, han havde præsenteret i sin 2. og 3. Symfoni. Årsagen var især mødet med den

schweiziske kunstner Adolf Wölfli (1864-1930). Wölfli var det meste af sit liv indlagt på et sinds-sygehospital, hvor han skabte tusindvis af tekster, billeder og musikbidder, der med voldsom kreativitet giver udtryk for et splittet sind. I hans lag-på-lag kunst med et mylder af detaljer og perspektiver kunne Nørgård genkende sig selv – bare med modsat fortegn. Den mørke side med kaos og uro i stedet for systembygning efter en naturlig orden.

“Jeg vidste, at det her var et frigørende øjeblik”, har Nørgård sagt om mødet med Wölfli kunst på kunstmuseet Louisiana i efteråret 1979. Wölfli kaos blev en retningsviser for Nørgård i en periode, der med rimelighed kan kaldes hans kriseår. Det første værk blev de tre korsange *Wie ein Kind* til tekster af Wölfli. Andre hovedværker fra perioden er operaen *Det guddommelige Tivoli* og Symfoni nr. 4, der for mange af Nørgårds følgere blev et overraskende og måske også skuffende brud med de foregående værkers berusende verdensharmonier. Men midt i al den gotiske uhygge fandt Nørgård en ny rytmisk dynamik, som bragte ham meget langt de følgende år. Nu med fokus på det utilpassede og på enegængerer, inklusive hans egen person. “Uforlideligheden er min position i dag, og det vil man næppe kalde noget klassisk trossynspunkt”, sagde Nørgård i et interview i 1982.

Wölfli havde i 1912 lagt planer for et musikværk med titlen *Indischer Roosen-Gaarten und Chinesischer Hexen-See* (*Den indiske rosenhave og den kinesiske heksesø*). Af oplagte grunde blev det ikke realiseret, men titlen alene var nok for Nørgård. “En sådan præcision i udtrykket af polaritet skal man da lede længe efter”, som han bemærkede. Resultatet blev det nærmeste, Nørgård er kommet en programsymfoni. Den symfoni, Wölfli ikke selv fik skrevet. Undertitlen er “Hommage à Adolf Wölfli”, og Per Nørgård har rammende omtalt den som “et håndslag til en ven, med tak for en god idé.”

Symfonien udgør en modsætningsfuld balance. Der er to satser – Rosenhaven og Heksesøen – som hver rummer noget af sin egen modsætning. Nørgård sammenligner det med yin og yang-figurene, der har et sort øje i den hvide “fisk” og et hvidt øje i den sorte.

1. satsens begynder på grundlag af en melodi, Nørgård havde skrevet til Wölfli digt *Abendlied*. Sangens ord *Traulichem, Alleine sein* (“Det er sørgeligt at være alene”) er et nedadgående motiv, der her er overført til violinerne og danner smuldrende, styrtende former. Egentlig ganske fredeligt, men i en uvirkelig ro. Vi er i et refugium – for noget. Anden del af satsen bygger på et fuglesangs-motiv af den afrikanske ‘robin-chat’, der først viser sig ganske blidt i

piccolofløjten og derefter i soloviolin. Det er symfoniens vigtigste tema. Nørgård så stort på, at fuglen hverken var indisk eller kinesisk – det var de musikalske kvaliteter, der var afgørende. “Temaet fascinerer mig, fordi det rummer noget som går ud over enhver systematik, det indeholder så at sige tilværelsens paradoks om lykke og sorg.” Dobbelttydigheden bliver endnu mere markant, når Nørgård lader temaet brede sig til messing og de mørke træblæsere. Da oplever vi “det sorte øje i den hvide fisk.”

Overgangen fra rosenhaven i 1. sats til heksesøen i 2. sats er helt abrupt. “Det er os andre, der et gale, hvis ikke vi véd, at vi lever på en katastrofe hvert sekund”, har Nørgård forklaret, og nu bryder katastrofen ud uden varsel. Heksesøen har fra første tone hidsige, krigeriske rytmer. Uvirkeligheden er blevet hårrejsende uhyggelig. Citater af fremmed musik dukker op i musikens udvikling: Den gamle salonvals “Fascination”, kendt fra Mantovanis sødsuppeorkester, trænger i en grotesk udgave igennem i messing. En vanvittig, schweizisk ländlermusik bryder ud, et ekko af endnu en Wölfli-sang af Nørgård. Melodiens faldende tertser har endda et sammenfald med “det uudslukkelige” tema fra Carl Nielsens 4. Symfoni, også den symfoni er et livskriseværk med konflikt og uforenelighed som bærende princip.

Ubønhørligt nærmer vi os heksesøens brændende vand, da man i det yderste cliffhanger-øjeblik hører en ny åbning. Symfoniens fem sidste toner er et lille glimt af fuglesangs-motivet. En fornemmelse af rosenhaven, som har været der hele tiden. Det hvide øje i den sorte fisk.

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OSLO FILHARMONISKE ORKESTER blev dannet i 1919 og er i dag Norges nationalorkester. I Oslo spiller det årligt 60-70 symfoniske koncerter, i tillæg dertil julekoncerter, skolekoncerter, kammerkoncerter og gratis friluftskoncerter med titusinder af lyttere. Orkestret har sine egne programmer og projekter for unge lyttere og udøvende med overskrifterne 'Ung arena' og 'Crescendo'. Med Mariss Jansons, chefdirigent 1979–2002, opnåede orkestret høj international anerkendelse. Turnéerne fra 1982 og fremover omfattede de fleste musikalske hovedarenaer i Europa, bl.a. en residens-periode i Wiener Musikverein og en række festivaler såsom BBC Proms, Edinburgh, Salzburg og Luzern samt store musikbyer i Nord- og Sydamerika og Østasien. Jansons blev efterfulgt af André Previn, som også stod i spidsen for turnéer i Europa og USA. I perioden 2007-2013 med Jukka-Pekka Saraste, i dag æresdirigent, besøgte orkestret bl.a. musikkens hovedarenaer i London (BBC Proms inklusive), Wien, Berlin, Köln, Frankfurt og Paris. Vasily Petrenko tiltrådte som chefdirigent i 2013. Hans koncerter i Oslo rangerer som højdepunkter i byen, og i udlandet er han og OFO for længst en efterspurgt enhed. Turné-besøg foreløbig omfattet bl.a. Wien, Berlin, Paris, BBC Proms, Edinburgh-festivalen, Toshiba Grand Concerts i Japan, Tyskland, Spanien og Storbritannien. I sæsonen 2016-17 er der planlagt besøg til Tyskland, Schweiz, Østrig, Sydkorea, Hong Kong og Taiwan. Petrenkos første indspilning med Filharmonikerne blev udgivet på LAWO Classics i 2015: Skrjabins symfonier nr. 3 og 4 (LWC1088). I 2016-17 følger Prokofjevs *Romeo og Julie* (i sin helhed), Skrjabins øvrige symfonier og hans klaverkoncert samt begyndelsen på en Richard Strauss-cyklus.

ofo.no

John Storgårds er 1. gæstedirigent for BBC Philharmonic og Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra i Ottawa, og er også kunstnerisk leder for Laplands Kammerorkester. Fra 2008-2015 var han chefdirigent for Helsinki Filharmonikerne. Storgårds har en karriere som både dirigent og violinist og er vidt og bredt anerkendt for sin kreative flair for at kombinere traditionel, sjælden og ny musik, når han optræder. Som gæstedirigent optræder han med orkestre som Oslo Filharmonikerne, Helsinki Filharmonikerne, Kungliga Filharmonikerna i Stockholm, WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, Bamberger Symphoniker, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, BBC Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra og Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Længere ude i verden er der fremtrædender med Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra og de store nordamerikanske orkestre i Cincinnati, St. Louis, Washington DC, Boston, Toronto, Montreal, Cleveland og New York. Storgårds har særligt fået anerkendelse for sine fortolkninger af Sibelius og Nielsen, og hans repertoire tæller desuden samtlige symfonier af Beethoven, Brahms, Bruckner, Mozart, Schubert og Schumann. Hans store engagement i opdagelsen af ny eller ukendt repertoire har resulteret i mange uopførte værker af bl.a. Brett Dean, Kaija Saariaho, Per Nørgård, Korngold og tilmed Sibelius. Han er en aktiv kammermusiker på festivaler, ikke mindst Avanti! Kammerorkesters årligt tilbagevendende 'Summer Sounds', og han optræder ofte som solist med internationale orkestre. John Storgårds har indspillet adskillige cd'er. For Dacapo har han bl.a. udgivet Vagn Holmboes kammer-symfonier og kammerværker af Sunleif Rasmussen, begge med Laplands Kammerorkester. Hans omfattende diskografi viser en interesse for et alsidigt musikalsk repertoire med talrige prisvindende indspilninger i spidsen for mange forskellige orkestre, ikke mindst Helsinki Filharmonikerne. Hans indspilning af Kalevi Aho's koncerter for theremin og horn modtog en *ECHO Klassik*-pris i 2015. Indspilningen af Pëteris Vasks' 2. symfoni og violin-koncert, med Storgårds som solist, modtog *Cannes Classical Disc of the Year Award* i 2004, og hans Rautavaara-cd med Helsinki Filharmonikerne vandt en *Gramophone Award* i 2012. John Storgårds studerede violin, komposition og direktion på Sibelius Akademiet i Helsinki og desuden violin hos Chaim Taub i Israel. Han modtog den finske stats musikpris i 2002.

johnstorgards.com

DDD

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Per Nørgård

