Teitur
LASSEN

TEENS – Questions to Teenagers



Ólöf Arnalds, Nive Nielsen, Vocals

Teitur Lassen, Vocals, Electronics • Ensemble MidtVest

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LASSEN

(b. 1977)

TEENS – Questions to Teenagers (2024)

1	I Dress Like My Sister	3:00	10	Spiders	2:54
2	The Weather	4:08	11	Two Meters	2:18
3	Confused	1:36	12	Snapchat	1:32
4	Seriously	1:16	13	Granny	2:59
5	Try To Sleep	2:33	14	Pregnant	2:00
6	Twinkle	2:36	15	Good Person	1:14
7	I Just Got Here	2:38	16	My Mother	1:58
8	I Am Afraid	1:43	17	In The Barn	2:14
9	Long Game	1:04	18	Sunshine	4:28

Teitur Lassen, Vocals, Electronics

Nive Nielsen, Vocals

Ólöf Arnalds, Vocals

Ensemble MidtVest

Alva Holm, Violin • Sanna Ripatti, Viola • Jonathan Slaatto, Cello
Charlotte Norholt, Flute • Peter Kirstein, Oboe • Fátima Trives-Escolano, Clarinet
Yavor Petkov, Bassoon • Neil Page, French horn • Jakob Alsgaard Bahr, Piano

TEENS audio is recorded with permission and edited by Teitur Lassen

Teenagers on the recording:
Ranja Eir Maibrittardóttir • Tummas Árni Dam Christoffersen
Jóhanna Ellingsgaard • Heiðrun í Dali



Photo: Leit Myndir

TEENS – Questions to Teenagers (2024)

What does life look like for teenagers in the Nordic countries? What do they dream of? What worries them? What brings them joy?

These are the questions considered in Faroese composer and performer Teitur Lassen's project *TEENS*, recorded on this album in collaboration with Greenlandic singer-songwriter Nive Nielsen, Icelandic artist Ólöf Arnalds, and Ensemble MidtVest.

About the concept

The composition process began with questionnaires and developed into an artistic dialogue with the adolescents. Teitur reached out to teenagers in the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland and Denmark with questions about their experiences, problems and joys. From these answers, Teitur pieced together lyrics. Later, other teenagers were presented with the lyrics and thus became a part of the creative process. The students gave Teitur feedback on how the lyrics affected them. Did the lyrics evoke thoughts or feelings? Did they recognise anything in them from their own life? Their feedback gained input into developing the project further. The result is *TEENS – Questions to Teenagers*, a collection of 18 songs for voice, wind quintet, piano, strings and electronics inspired by feedback from the teenagers. The final pieces were later performed for the students in their local concert halls.

Enhancing the voices of the youth across borders

The idea behind the project is to present young people with a platform to share their thoughts and feelings about being young today. Also, presenting them with perspectives from people their own age from another country in the hope that this will spike recognition, understanding and the feeling of being heard across borders. This perspective is underlined by the performing artists, who descend from four different countries: Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Denmark.

About the pieces

The songs are beautiful, quirky, funny and touching. You will hear Teitur, Nive and Olöf sing about spiders, grandparents, a horse, and dressing up like your big sister. You will also hear samples of the teenagers themselves, voicing answers from the questionnaires.

Teitur Lassen

Teitur Lassen (b. 1977) is a Faroese composer, producer, musician and singer-songwriter. Lassen left the Faroe Islands as a teenager in a bid to access the technology and musical professionalism that he felt wasn't available at home. As a solo artist he has released seven studio albums, has worked with major international artists, and contributed to several film and TV soundtracks. In 2003 Lassen's first album, *Poetry & Aeroplanes* attracted the attention of artists such as Rufus Wainwright, Aimee Mann and KT Tunstall, all of whom took him on tour. In 2006, he released his second album *Stay Under the Stars*, which won two Danish Grammys. Third album, *The Singer* was released in 2008 and was his first album to be issued in the UK garnering critical praise from *The Guardian* and *The Sunday Times*. A collaboration with American composer Nico Muhly followed, along with writing/producing for other artists, and embarking on a world tour. In 2013 he released the album *Story Music*, which features more than 70 musicians and singers ranging in age from 8 to 80. Further projects have included collaborations with the well-known German singer Judith Holofernes, and in October 2016 Nonesuch released the album *Confessions*, a collaboration with Nico Muhly and the Holland Baroque orchestra. Most recently, he has released the album *Songs from a Social Distance* with Aarhus Jazz Orchestra (2023), and he featured on the single *Louise* by Danish artist eee gee. Teitur Lassen was knighted by the Queen of Denmark Margrethe II in 2021.

www.teitur.com



Teitur Lassen

Photo: Leit Myndir

Ólöf Arnalds

Ólöf Arnalds is an Icelandic composer and multi-instrumentalist. She studied violin and classical singing, and later studied composition and new media at the Iceland Academy of the Arts, and has been active within the Icelandic music scene since the early 2000s. Arnalds was a touring member of Icelandic indie band Múm for five years from 2003 before launching her solo career, and has collaborated with artists such as Björk, Mugison, Slowblow and her husband Skúli Sverrisson, including on a piece written especially for her and the Iceland Symphony Orchestra. Ólöf Arnalds' most distinctive asset is her otherworldly, captivating voice, which Björk described as 'somewhere between a child and an old woman'.

www.olofarnalds.com

Nive Nielsen

Nive Nielsen is a Greenlandic Inuk singer-songwriter and acclaimed actress. Her work highlights Inuit perspectives, contributing to global representations of Greenlandic culture. She launched her music career while studying in Canada, forming the indie folk and Inuit rock band Nive & The Deer Children, which she fronts as lead vocalist and songwriter; the group, featuring a fluid line-up of five to eight musicians (including her husband Charlie Shapiro on guitar and banjo), debuted with the self-released album *Nive Sings!* in 2009, which achieved gold status in Greenland. Its follow-up, *Feet First* (2012), was re-released in the United States in 2018, and the band has since toured internationally, performing for dignitaries such as the Queen of Denmark, and collaborating with artists like Giant Sand. As an actress, Nielsen has appeared in *The New World* (2005), *The Terror* (2018), *The North Water* (2021), *Washington Black* (2025) and *Smilla's Sense of Snow* (2025).

Ensemble MidtVest

Ensemble MidtVest (EMV) is a versatile group of international musicians based in Denmark, known for the high quality of its chamber music concerts as well as for creating innovative musical experiences both on and off stage. Established in 2002, EMV consists of nine classical musicians: a string trio, a wind quintet and a pianist. It plays around 100 concerts a year in Denmark and abroad, and has performed at Carnegie Hall in New York and Kings Place in London, as well as at numerous international festivals. EMV regularly collaborates with high-profile artists such as Pekka Kuusisto, Jennifer Stumm, Bo Skovhus and the Danish String Quartet, with Sergio Azzolini and Carsten Dahl having served as artistic consultants. The ensemble has recorded 24 critically acclaimed albums, and been featured in hundreds of radio broadcasts. Aside from traditional concerts, EMV is committed to outreach projects and carrying the transformative power and relevance of classical music into the 21st century, fully realising its motto, 'music is a right, not a privilege'.

www.emv.dk

EMV is based at HEART – Herning Museum of Contemporary Art and it is funded by the Danish Arts Foundation as well as three municipalities: Herning, Holstebro and Struer.



Olöf Arnalds

Photo: Leit Myndir



Nive Nielsen

Photo: Leit Myndir



Ensemble MidtVest and Teitur Lassen

Photo: Leit Myndir

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Christian Ulf-Hansen, 2.A and their teachers at HTX Holstebro (Denmark),
students and teachers at Skúlin á Fløtum in the Faroe Islands,
interviewees in Iceland and Greenland.

The artists wish to thank the following sponsors





The concerns, joys and fears of teenagers in the Nordic countries is the focus of *TEENS*, a project by Faroese composer and performer Teitur Lassen. Their responses to his questions became the basis of 18 songs, for various permutations of instruments, sung by Lassen, Nive Nielsen and Ólöf Arnalds – quirky, funny, droll and sensitive songs about spiders, grandparents, a horse and many more. The recording also preserves the voices of the teenagers themselves, as they answer the questions Lassen posed to them. The result is a new collection of contemporary songs – a genuine collaboration between teenagers, charismatic singers and the acclaimed Ensemble MidtVest.

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Songs for Voice, Wind Quintet, Piano, Strings and Electronics

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Ólöf Arnalds 2 4 7 11 17, Nive Nielsen 4 5 10 11 13 16, Vocals

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Recorded: 8–9 October 2024 at The Nordic House, Torshavn, Faroe Islands
Producer, vocal recording, editing and electronics: Teitur Lassen
Engineer and mixing: John Fomsgaard • Mastering: George Tanderø
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