

An abstract, circular, organic pattern in shades of blue and white, resembling a stylized flower or a microscopic organism, set against a solid black background. The pattern has a central dark circle where the text is located.

Per Nørgård *Symphonies 2 & 6*

Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, John Storgårds



Per Nørgård

Per Nørgård (b. 1932)
Symphonies 2 & 6

Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra
John Storgårds, conductor

	Symphony No. 6 “At the End of the Day” (1999).....	31:15
	<i>3 passages for large orchestra</i>	
1	I. Moderato	15:08
2	II. Lentissimo.....	9:21
3	III. Allegro energico.....	6:46
4	Symphony No. 2 – In One Movement (1970; rev. 1971).....	23:06

TOTAL: 54:21

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.

Nørgård has indeed 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 said when his Sixth Symphony was given its first performance in 2000.

Symphony No. 6 / At the End of the Day

It was with a roguish smile that Per Nørgård presented the title of his new Sixth Symphony *At the End of Day* or, in Danish, *Når alt kommer til alt* at a press conference in 1999. Nørgård was then 67 years old, and men of his age retire. Had he written his last symphony, a summation of a lifelong immersion in the genre?

The symphony had been commissioned by the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra and the Oslo Philharmonic to celebrate the Millennium, and the first performance six days into the year 2000 was to prove one of the self-renewals with which Nørgård has so often surprised us. For it is quite certain that *no* doors were closed in this symphony. On the contrary Nørgård is more exploratory, more playful and rhythmically ebullient than in any of his previous symphonies. For despite the two titles of the symphony (teasingly not-quite-synonymous as they are) the point is that the end never comes. Each closure is followed by a new beginning. Nørgård in fact underscored this quite specifically by following up with both a Symphony No. 7 and No. 8.

Symphony No. 6 is also one of Nørgård's most classical symphonies, divided into three movements: a large, dynamic first movement, a slow second movement and a short, lively final movement. Despite the pauses between the movements the music develops in one long, fluid process, and Nørgård therefore prefers to call the movements in his Sixth Symphony "passages" and compares the pauses to bridges over an onward-flowing stream.

The first four minutes of the symphony form a restless statement recalling the exposition of a classical first movement. But the exposition ends at a standstill. After rumbling drum sounds the music dies out. After which the first of the symphony's new beginnings immediately takes over! The restart develops with tremendous imagination into a game with the orchestral possibilities. The exuberance comes close to ending in anarchy, and then the orchestra drops into a gorge of dark timbres, produced by hordes of low-sounding, unusual instruments such as the double bass trombone, double bass tuba and double bass clarinet.

The dark, unreal sounds become the point of departure for the second passage, which starts with a very slow pulse. The bass chords function as a passacaglia, a foundation for a development over it which increases in tempo and in the number of layers. The flow moves the music onward in the mischievous third passage, where jerky riffs and the rolling, descending lines from the beginning of the symphony frolic with the listener. A humorous game with the infinite, until that development too sinks into the depths. Was that – at the end of the day – the ending? No – for at a quite unexpected point a narrow chink is opened up to new horizons. "A delta of other worlds," Per Nørgård calls it. From here new journeys begin. A thousand new years wait ahead.

The symphony is dedicated to Nørgård's wife, Helle Rahbæk Nørgård. After another performance in 2000 Nørgård revised the score along with the conductor Thomas Dausgaard, but by then he had already embarked on the pursuit of the "other worlds" that Symphony No. 6 had presented for him. The symphony quickly acquired a sister piece, a mirror-image in the form of the large orchestral piece *Terrains vagues*. It begins where Symphony No. 6 ends. But that, as usual with Per Nørgård, is quite another story.

Symphony No. 2 – In One Movement

In the 1960s Nørgård had discovered the principle he called the Infinity Series; a sequence which, translated into notes, combines modernist rigour with natural metamorphosis. The

endless generation by the infinity series of new intervals emerges, among other ways, from the formation of the inversion of the series itself and of fractals. The intervals of the series can be found in other proportions such as every fourth note, every sixteenth note, every sixty-fourth note etc., and thus it develops so it can exist on several planes at the same time.

For Nørgård this was a revelation, and his quite personal path out of the experiments of the 1960s with the serial techniques that had a stifling effect on him. Instead the infinity series threw all the doors open wide. Its breakthrough was *Voyage into the Golden Screen* for chamber orchestra. The year was 1968, the hippie era was changing the world, and Nørgård too. He fetched the title of the work from a song by the singer/songwriter Donovan.

Voyage into the Golden Screen unfolded the infinity series in “a full round” of 1,024 notes. The result was so fruitful that Nørgård immediately resolved to write a whole symphony on the same principle. *Symphony No. 2 – in one movement* became the title, and it is a tribute to the power – both rule-governed and natural – of the infinity series.

“Instead of about 1000 notes of the series, I wanted to use about 4000 notes to exploit the potential for further immersion in the many layers and interval combinations of the infinity series. Instead of the ‘untouched unfolding’ of the tonal sequence and its orchestration I now wanted to ‘intervene’: to create melodies, take it to climaxes, to enlighten etc., but all with respect for the continuing flow and preservation of the special, timeless objectivity characteristic of the infinity series,” Per Nørgård explained.

The main course of the symphony is the first 4096 notes of the infinity series, which run as a constant strand in more or less uninterrupted quavers. The long one-movement sequence is composed of phases, specifically 16 phases each with 256 notes of the series. After each phase of the development Nørgård places a bell signal. A ‘round’ is completed and we have risen one level. After every fourth phase Nørgård marks the progress of the music with what he calls a ‘screen’ of brass fanfares. Great, deafening orgastic eruptions. They too are part of an order such that screens Nos. 1 and 3 and screens Nos. 2 and 4 are related pairs.

The symphony begins with a ‘birth’ of the infinity series. It develops gradually, first as pitchless air sounds, then unison sounds and after that quarter-tone intervals. The chromatic intervals are approaching. And the peal of a bell marks the starting shot for the unfolding of the infinity series. The music takes off, euphorically, almost psychedelically, as if it has been given wings.

For most of the symphony the quavers are played by the flutes, while the slower layers are usually pitched lower in the orchestra. Because the various layers of the music have the same origin, this gives the symphony a sense of totality that recalls ambient music. The non-stop rhythmic flow is also, one could say, related to the American minimalism of the time, although the rhythmic pulse in Nørgård’s Second Symphony has a different ‘swing’. But there are even lines back to musical precursors, for the growth of the symphony makes it a radical extension of the metamorphosis idea of Nørgård’s teacher, Vagn Holmboe, and their shared model, Sibelius. Nørgård’s Second Symphony and Sibelius’ Seventh Symphony are both demonstratively one-movement symphonies and originate in a scale presentation (C major for Sibelius and the infinity series for Nørgård!). And the trombone theme which marks the key points in Sibelius’ Seventh Symphony acquires a distant cousin in the form of Nørgård’s overwhelming brass ‘screens’.

A few years before Symphony No. 2 and *Voyage into the Golden Screen* Nørgård had even made a geographical break with conservatism by terminating his tenure at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen. Instead he relocated with his best pupils to Jutland, to the Royal Academy in Aarhus, and in 1970 the Aarhus City Orchestra gave the symphony its first performance, conducted by Per Dreier.

At that time the world-famous Romanian conductor Sergiu Celibidache was a frequent visitor to the Danish National Symphony Orchestra in Copenhagen, and he had become very enthusiastic about *Voyage into the Golden Screen*. Nørgård played the radio recording of the new Second Symphony for him, and Celibidache stated that he had never heard such beautiful music in his life. An international success for the symphony, which Nørgård revised for the occasion, was in the offing. But Celibidache’s temperament got in the way; first when he demanded a whole 20 hours of orchestral rehearsals for the symphony, and then on a quite different occasion when he walked out on the orchestra in a rage. Celibidache never came to conduct a single Per Nørgård work, but by then the symphony had already been dedicated to him – and it still is.

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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 Avant! 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 Avant!-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 Avant! 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 indviklede 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 jævnligt 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”, sagde Nørgård, da hans 6. Symfoni blev uropført i 2000.

Symfoni nr. 6, Når alt kommer til alt / At the End of the Day

Det var med et skælmisk smil, at Per Nørgård ved et pressemøde i 1999 præsenterede titlen på sin nye 6. Symfoni “Når alt kommer til alt” eller på engelsk “At the End of Day”. Nørgård var da 67 år, og mænd i hans alder går på pension. Havde han skrevet sin sidste symfoni, en opsummering af en livslang fordybelse i genren?

Symfonien var bestilt af DR SymfoniOrkestret, Göteborg SymfoniOrkestret og Oslo Filharmonikerne i anledning af årtusindeskiftet, og uropførelsen seks dage inde i år 2000 blev endnu en af de selvfornyer, Nørgård så ofte har overrasket med. For der bliver bestemt *ikke* lukket nogen døre i denne symfoni. Tværtimod er Nørgård mere opdagelysten, mere legende og rytmask boblende end i nogen af sine hidtidige symfonier. For på trods af symfoniens titler (der driller ved ikke at være helt kongruente) er pointen, at enden aldrig kommer. Efter enhver afslutning følger en ny begyndelse. Det understregede Nørgård også helt konkret ved at følge op med både en Symfoni nr. 7 og nr. 8.

Symfoni nr. 6 er også en af Nørgårds mest klassiske symfonier, delt op i tre satser: En stor, dynamisk førstesats, en langsom andensats og en livlig, kort finale. På trods af satspauserne

er det musikalske forløb som én lang flydende proces, og Nørgård foretrækker derfor at kalde satserne i sin 6. Symfoni for “passager” og sammenligner satspauserne med broer over en fortløbende strøm.

De første fire minutter af symfonien er et rastløst udspil med mindelser om ekspositionsdelen i en klassisk førstesats. Men oplægget ender i en stilstand. Efter rumlende trommelyde dør musikken ud. Hvorefter den første af symfoniens nye begyndelser straks tager over! Omstarten udvikler sig med forrygende fantasi og i en leg med de orkestrale muligheder. Frodigheden er tæt på at ende i anarki, og da dratter hele orkestret ned i et svælg af mørke klangfarver, frembragt af horder af dybe, usædvanlige instrumenter som kontrabasbasun, kontrabastuba og kontrabasklarinet.

De mørke, uvirkelige klange bliver udgangspunktet for den anden passage, der lægger ud i en meget langsom puls. Basakkorderne fungerer som en passacaglia, et fundament for en udvikling, der ovenover vokser i tempo og i antallet af lag. Strømmen bevæger musikken videre i den drilske tredje passage, hvor spjættende riffs og de trillende, faldende linjer fra symfoniens begyndelse driver gæk med tilhøreren. En humoristisk leg med det uendelige, da også dén udvikling synker sammen i dybet. Var det, når alt kommer til alt, afslutningen? Nej – for et helt uventet sted åbnes et smalt udkig til nye horisonter. “Et delta af andre verdener”, kalder Per Nørgård det. Herfra begynder nye rejser. Tusind nye år venter forude.

Symfonien er tilegnet Nørgårds kone, Helle Rahbæk Nørgård. Efter endnu en opførelse i år 2000 reviderede Nørgård partituret sammen med dirigenten Thomas Dausgaard, men da var han allerede gået i gang med at forfølge de “andre verdener”, som Symfoni nr. 6 havde præsenteret for ham. Symfonien fik hurtigt et søsterværk, en spejling i form af det store orkesterstykke *Terrains vagues*. Det begynder, hvor Symfoni nr. 6 ender. Men det er, som sædvanlig hos Per Nørgård, en helt anden historie.

Symfoni nr. 2 – i én sats

I 1960’erne havde Nørgård opdaget det princip, han gav navnet Uendelighedsrækken. En sekvens, der omsat i toner forener modernistisk strenghed med en naturlig metamorfose. Uendelighedsrækken endeløse generering af nye intervaller viser sig nemlig bl.a. at danne rækkens egen omvendning og også at forme fraktaler. Rækkens intervaller kan genfindes i andre

proportioner som hver 4. tone, hver 16. tone, hver 64. tone, osv., og udvikler sig dermed til at kunne eksistere på flere planer samtidigt.

For Nørgård var det en åbenbaring og hans helt personlige vej ud af 1960'ernes eksperimenter med seriel teknik, der havde virket kvælende på ham. I stedet åbnede uendelighedsrækken alle døre på vid gab. Dens gennembrud blev *Rejse ind i den gyldne skærm* for kammerorkester. Året var 1968, hippietiden var i færd med at forandre verden, også Nørgård. Værkets titel tog han fra et nummer af singer/songwriteren Donovan.

Rejse ind i den gyldne skærm udfoldede uendelighedsrækken i "en fuld omgang" på 1.024 toner. Resultatet var så frugtbart, at Nørgård straks satte sig for at skrive en hel symfoni efter samme princip. "Symfoni nr. 2 – i én sats" blev titlen, som er en hyldest til uendelighedsrækkens både lovmæssige og naturlige kraft.

"I stedet for ca. 1.000 toner af rækken, ville jeg bruge ca. 4.000 toner for på denne måde at få mulighed for yderligere fordybelse i uendelighedsrækkens mange lag og intervalliske kombinationer. I stedet for den "urørte afvikling" af toneforløbet og dets orkestration ville jeg nu "gribe ind": Skabe melodier, føre mod højdepunkter, formørke, oplyse osv., men alt sammen i respekt for den fortsatte strøm og med bevarelse af den særlige, tidløse objektivitet, der kendetegner uendelighedsrækken", forklarede Per Nørgård.

Symfoniens hovedforløb er de første 4.096 toner af uendelighedsrækken, der går som en rød tråd i stort set uafbrudte ottendedele. Det lange, ensatsede forløb er sammensat af faser, nærmere bestemt 16 faser med hver 256 toner af rækken. Efter hver fase i udviklingen placerer Nørgård et klokkesignal. En "omgang" er taget, vi er kommet et niveau højere op. Efter hver 4. fase markerer Nørgård udviklingen med hvad han kalder en "skærm" af messingfanfarer. Store, overdøvende, orgastiske udbrud. Også de indgår i en orden, så skærm nr. 1 og 3 og skærm nr. 2 og 4 er parvist beslægtet.

Symfonien begynder med en "fødsel" af uendelighedsrækken. Det udvikler sig gradvist, først som tonløse luftlyde, så unisone klange og derefter kvarttoneintervaller. De kromatiske intervaller nærmer sig. Og med et klokkeslag går startskuddet for udfoldelsen af uendelighedsrækken. Musikken letter, euforisk, næsten psykedelisk, som har den fået vinger.

Ottendedelene spilles i det meste af symfonien af fløjterne, mens de langsommere lag som oftest ligger dybere i orkestret. Fordi musikkens forskellige lag har samme udspring, giver

det symfonien en sanselig totalforfølelse, der minder om ambient music. Den rytmiske nonstop-strøm er vel også beslægtet med samtidens amerikanske minimalisme, selv om den rytmiske puls i Nørgårds 2. Symfoni har et anderledes swing. Men trådene rækker også tilbage til de musikalske forgængere, for symfoniens vækstforløb gør den til en radikal forlængelse af metamorfosetankerne hos Nørgårds lærer, Vagn Holmboe, og deres fælles forbillede, Sibelius. Både Nørgårds 2. Symfoni og Sibelius' 7. Symfoni er demonstrativt ensatsede og udspringer af en skalapresentation (henholdsvis C-dur hos Sibelius og uendelighedsrækken hos Nørgård!). Og basuntemaet, der markerer nøglepunkterne i Sibelius' 7. Symfoni, får en fjern slægtning i form af Nørgårds overvældende messingskærme.

På år inden Symfoni nr. 2 og *Rejse ind i den gyldne skærm* havde Nørgård også geografisk brudt med konservatismen og opsagt sin stilling på Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium i København. I stedet flyttede han med sine bedste elever til Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium i Aarhus, og i 1970 uropførte Aarhus Byorkester symfonien, dirigeret af Per Dreier.

På det tidspunkt var den verdensberømte rumænske dirigent Sergiu Celibidache hyppig gæst hos DR SymfoniOrkestret i København, og han var blevet meget begejstret over *Rejse ind i den gyldne skærm*. Nørgård spillede radiooptagelsen af den nye 2. Symfoni for ham, og Celibidache udtalte, at han aldrig havde hørt så smuk musik i hele sit liv. En international succes for symfonien, som Nørgård til lejligheden reviderede, stod lige for. Men Celibidaches temperament kom i vejen, først da han krævede hele 20 timers orkesterprøver til symfonien, og derefter da han ved en helt anden anledning forlod orkestret i raseri. Celibidache kom aldrig til at dirigere et eneste Per Nørgård-værk, men da var symfonien allerede blevet tilegnet ham – og er det stadig.

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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 Helsingfors 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, Helsingfors 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 fremtrædende 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 Helsingfors Filharmonikerne. Hans indspilning af Kalevi Aho's koncerter for theremin og horn modtog en *ECHO Klassik*-pris i 2015. Indspilningen af Pēteris 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 Helsingfors Filharmonikerne vandt en *Gramophone Award* i 2012. John Storgårds studerede violin, komposition og direktion på Sibelius Akademiet i Helsingfors 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

