



Gottfred Matthison-Hansen

Concert for Organ

Carl Nielsen

Commotio

Grethe Krogh

Holmens Church, Copenhagen

dana
cord

Gottfred Matthison-Hansen

(1832-1909)

Concert for Organ, opus 15 (1874) 18:25

[1] Allegro moderato 9:07

[2] Andantino – Andante 4:33

[3] Finale fugato – Maestoso 4:43

Carl Nielsen

(1865-1931)

[4] Commotio, opus 58 (1930-31) 23:50

Grethe Krogh, organ

Holmens Church, Copenhagen

Denne optagelse blev lavet i forbindelse med en koncert i Holmens Kirke i april måned 1996.

This recording was made in connection with a concert at Holmens Church, Copenhagen, in April 1996.

Front cover painting: ©Harald Giersing (1881-1927): Landevej ved Faaborg (1920)
Statens Museum for Kunst. COPY-DAN, BILLEDKUNST 1996. Photo: Hans Petersen

Photo: (Grethe Krogh) ©Karin Munk

Støttet af/Sponsored by: Dansk Musiker Forbund, Dansk Solist-Forbund, VELUX FONDEN af 1981, Carl Nielsen og Anne Marie Carl-Nielsens Legat, Beckett-Fonden.

CONCERT OPUS 15

Gottfred Matthison-Hansen (1832-1909) var en betydende skikkelse i dansk musikliv i det halve århundrede, man (i det mindste i tilbageblik) kan være tilbøjelig til at se som en lang overgangsperiode. Han begyndte at gøre sig gældende som koncerterende organist i anden halvdel af 1850'erne, altså netop som vor såkaldte guldalder endegyldigt var til ende som enestående epoke i nationens samfunds- og kulturliv. Da han i 1905 gik af som konservatoriedirektør, var et moderne og meget anderledes Danmark forlængst på vej, og i musikken var Carl Nielsen blevet det store navn, nu da først Niels W. Gade (1817-90) og siden J.P.E. Hartmann (1805-1900) var gået bort. Disse to stormænd havde både som komponister og som nationens fremmeste musiklærere forvaltet guldalder-arven i en behersket romantisk ånd; G. Matthison-Hansen, derimod, var hurtigt blevet Wagnerianer, og han var den første organist herhjemme med musik af Franck, Guilmant og Widor på repertoireet.

Som organist nød G. Matthison-Hansen stor anseelse, ikke blot i Danmark men også udenlands, og han var højt skattet som lærer. På koncertrejse 1884 sluttede han venskab med Liszt i Weimar — den Liszt, som på koncertrejse 1841 havde aflagt visit i Vor Frue kirke hos en komponist, der mere end nogen anden repræsenterede den klassicistiske side af den danske guldaldermusik, nemlig C.E.F. Weyse (1774-1842); gamle Weyse var jo Københavns domorganist, og han imponerede den gæstende

unge klaverløve med en lang improviseret dobbeltfuga i fem afsnit. Som organist i Trinitatis kirke virkede samtidig Weyse-eleven A.P. Berggreen (1801-80); Berggreens interesse for den nordiske folkesang havde haft afgørende betydning for hans egen elev Niels W. Gade, hvis gennembrud som komponist netop i 1840'ernes begyndelse kom til at betyde et gennembrud for et nyt romantisk tonefald i den danske guldaldermusik.

I 1881 overtog G. Matthison-Hansen Berggreens embede i Trinitatis kirke, og her holdt han fra og med 1883 en række 'orgelforedrag', hvor han (i bedste overensstemmelse med den pædagogiske tradition kendt fra Lumbyes orkesterkoncerter i Tivoli og fra Musikforeningens virksomhed under Gades ledelse) præsenterede det københavnske publikum for både det klassiske repertoire og tidens nye musik. Ifølge musikforskeren Claus Røllum-Larsens undersøgelser inddrog komponisten her sin egen Concert opus 15 ved tre lejligheder, nemlig i 1883 (kun 2. sats, under betegnelsen Fantasi) og i 1885 samt 1902 (i begge sidstnævnte tilfælde hele kompositionen). Værket selv er dog formentlig fra 1874 (stadig iflg. Røllum-Larsen) og hører således til i begyndelsen af den intense periode (1874-77), hvor G. Matthison-Hansen gav ikke færre end ca. 100 orgelkoncerter rundt omkring i danske købstæder.

I kredsen af danske komponister i anden halvdel af 1800-tallet vil det næppe være urimeligt at betegne G. Matthison-Hansen som sensorantiker; hans Concert opus 15 ville det

derimod ikke gå an at betegne som senromantisk musik. Værket er værdsat i orgelkredse, både nationalt og internationalt, og skulle nok kunne nå et bredere publikum; det blev i sin tid trykt hos Kahnt i Leipzig og bar en dedikation til Carl Riedel (1827-88), en fremstående tysk dirigent, komponist og Wagnerianer. Grethe Kroghs indspilning er foretaget ud fra Edition Egtveds danske nyudgave ved hendes elev Svend Prip (1987).

Concert for orgel falder i tre klart adskilte satter, hhv d-mol, F-dur og d-mol. Første sats er præget af en gennemgående (marcherende, om man vil) fjerdedelsrytme og fastholder sin grundkarakter fra først til sidst, uanset at forløbet veksler mellem heroiske og lyriske tonenald. Anden sats er blidt syngende og indadvendt, men den beundringsværdige præcision i den melodiske gestik og i fletværket af linjer og rytmer sikrer, at musikken ikke et øjeblik falder i staver eller går i stå. Den prægtige (dog alt andet end langstrakte) fugerede finalesats lægger ud med sit otte takter lange tema, hvis afsluttende to fraser har et præg af dansk salmetone — eller er det 'bare' nordisk folketone? Adskillige kyndige udenlandske tilhørere har reageret på mødet med Concert ved at spørge, om G. Matthison-Hansen kendte Grieg? Det gjorde han, både personligt og musikalsk, og i forbindelse med G. Matthison-Hansens opus 15 kunne man måske bl.a. pege på nordmandens tidlige samlinger af klaverstykker, hovedsagelig trykt i København.

COMMOTIO

Gottfred Matthison-Hansens Concert opus 15 er herlig orgelmusik, men kunne uden større problemer omsættes til stort harmoniorkester eller til symfoniorkester. At transskribere Carl Nielsens sene orgelværk Commotio til orkestermusik ville være endnu mere fristende, men ville til gengæld være ulig mere svært — og så er dog i grunden Carl Nielsens første og eneste store orgelværk samtidig hans sidste store værk i den symfoniske genre...

Med Kuhlau og Lumbye som undtagelser beklædte vist samtlige virkelig betydningsfulde danske 1800-tals komponister også vigtige poster som organister i hovedstaden. Carl Nielsen (1865-1931) er uden diskussion den største danske komponist nogensinde, og han skrev nordisk musiks formentlig største enkeltværk for orgel — og dog var Carl Nielsen slet ikke organist (ja knap nok pianist), og sine mange vidunderlige salmemelodier til trods havde han ingen personlig tilknytning til kirken og dens liv; Commotio er da også entydigt beregnet til koncertbrug.

Commotio er en titel, der vil få læger og lægesekretærer til at trække på smilebåndet, for commotio cerebri er lægelatin for hjernerytelse. Hvad Carl Nielsen tænkte på, var imidlertid blot bevægelse (fysisk som åndelig) — og allerede dér aner vi, hvordan han med endnu et nyt stort enkeltværk atter en gang formåede at give nyt og stort udtryk for det mest karakteristiske i sin egen musikalske og kunstneri-

ske begavelse. Værket er komponeret 1930-31, efter grundige studier (ikke mindst hos Bach) og med de 29 små præludeer fra 1929-30 som 'fingerøvelser'; hos Nielsen selv er vejen frem mod Commotio navnlig de fire store klaverværker (Chaconne, 1916; Tema med variationer, 1917; den 'luciferiske' Suite, 1919-20; Tre Klaverstykker, 1928) samt Sjette-symfonien (1924-25), Fløjtekoncerten (1926) og Klarinetkoncerten (1928). Den her foreliggende indspilning er Grethe Kroghs tredje og følger lige som de to tidligere den trykte udgave redigeret af Emil Telmányi. Carl Nielsens fortrolige og svigersøn (Samfundet til Udgivelse af Dansk Musik, 1932 og 1954), Grethe Krogh er selv en traditionsbærer i forhold til Commotio, idet hun har drøftet værket med organist Peter Thomsen (1893-1976), som var en af Carl Nielsens 'sparringspartnere' i orgel-anliggender og fik betroet den private uropførelse af Commotio i Christiansborg Slotskirke i København, 24.4.1931; blandt tilhørerne ved den lejlighed var i øvrigt Mogens Wöldike (1897-1988), som Grethe Krogh ligeledes har haft lejlighed til at konsultere angående Commotio.

For organisten som for tilhøreren er hvert møde med Commotio en udfordring. Man kan vælge at spille/lytte inden for rammerne af en før-klassisk begrebsverden, hvor den mere koncerterende orgelmusik var karakteriseret ved modstillingen af præledium og fuga, eller man kan spille/lytte ud fra det synspunkt, at Carl Nielsen med Commotio skrev sit sidste store stykke moderne instrumentalmusik inden for ram-

merne af den klassisk-romantiske sonatetradition. Carl Nielsen var en sand mester i variationer og andre former for genbrug, så man kan lægge mærke til, at der – uanset værkets majestætiske strømnen fremad i (her) 22 minutter, fra det store åbningsparti til den bjergtagende slutning – ligger et dramatisk knudepunkt i det (her) 8. minut; med dette knudepunkt som akse breder der sig nemlig et stærkt væv af mere eller mindre symmetrisk anordnede genkaldelser på alle planer i kompositionen. Tænker man derimod ud fra modellen 'præledium og fuga', ligger skellet langt senere – der er ganske vist mange fugerede partier i værket indtil da, men ved det (her) 15. minuts begyndelse intoneres for første gang det syngende og vuggende tema, som skal bære musikken fremad-udad, så at til sidst alle stjerner og planeter kredser omkring os i et rum af klingende lys.

Carl Nielsen skrev i et brev, at han efter at have talt takter op kunne konstatere, at det med Commotio var lykkedes ham at overgå J.S. Bach som orgelkomponist. Det var virkelig kun hans spøg – men mon ikke den uforlignelige Thomaskantor og den store måske-danser Buxtehude nikker anerkendende i deres himmel, hver gang en opførelse eller et genhør med en indspilning på ny afdækker den kolossale rigdom, det lykkedes vor strithårede lille fynbo-københavn at nedlægge i denne komposition, om hvilken han i et andet brev sagde: "jeg tror selv, det er mit mest gennemførte værk."

– Svend Ravnkilde, København i juni 1996

Grethe Krogh var i en årrække orgelprofessor på Det kgl. danske Musikkonservatorium i København. Hun er uddannet i klaver og orgel sammesteds samt i Paris. Før sin ansættelse på musikkonservatoriet var hun organist i Holmens Kirke. Grethe Krogh har koncerteret over hele Europa, inkl. adskillige gange i det tidligere Sovjetunionen og i USA, som hun har gæstet en snes gange i forbindelse med omfattende koncertturnéer. Hun lever nu som free lance koncertspiller.

Grethe Krogh har været solist ved en række fornemme festspil, ligesom hun ofte er dommer ved internationale orgelkonkurrencer som f.eks. de berømte konkurrencer i Chartres og Nürnberg. Hun har uropført orgelværker og er internationalt kendt for at spille et stort, yderst varieret repertoire, som har gjort hende til en af vore oftest benyttede orgelspillere. Blandt hendes grammonoplader, hvoraf adskillige med dansk musik, er Carl Nielsen orgelværker.

Grethe Krogh er en højt skattet pædagog, som blandt sine elever kan regne en lang række af Europas og USAs unge organister i dag.

Hun har medvirket ved Danmarks Radios torsdagskoncerter. De københavnske musikanmeldere har hædret hende ved at tildele hende Musikanmeldernes Kunstnerpris, ligesom hun også har modtaget Tagea Brandts rejselægt.

CONCERTO, OPUS 15

Gottfred Matthison-Hansen (1832-1909) was a figure of importance in Danish musical life over a period of five decades. He came to public attention as a concert organist in the second half of the 1850s, just as the so-called Golden Age (1800-1850, approximately) had come to an end as a unique era in Danish social and cultural life. By the time he resigned as Director of the Copenhagen Conservatoire in 1905, a modern and very different Denmark had already begun to emerge. In music, for instance, Carl Nielsen (1865-1931) had become the big name, now that Niels Gade (1817-1890) and J.P.E. Hartmann (1805-1900) had passed away. As composers, and the Nation's foremost music teachers too, these champions had handed on the Golden-Age legacy in a moderate, Romantic spirit; Matthison-Hansen, however, had quickly become a Wagnerite, and he was the first Danish organist to include the music of Franck, Guilmant and Widor in his recitals.

Matthison-Hansen enjoyed a fine reputation as an organist both at home and abroad, and he was highly esteemed as a teacher. During a concert tour in 1884 he struck up a friendship with Liszt in Weimar. When, in 1841, Liszt visited Copenhagen, he had taken time to visit the Cathedral (Our Lady's Church) in order to pay a call on C.E.F. Weyse (1774-1842), the Cathedral organist and indeed the composer who more than anyone else represented the Classical side of Danish Golden-Age music.

The old gentleman impressed his young guest (a fabled piano virtuoso, but also a fellow organist) by improvising a long double fugue in five sections. Meanwhile, the organist at nearby Trinity Church was one of Weyse's own pupils, A.P. Berggreen (1801-1880), and Berggreen's interest in Scandinavian folk song had a decisive influence on one of his own students, Niels Gade. Gade's breakthrough as a composer, right at the beginning of the 1840s, signalled the breakthrough of a new, Romantic inflection in the music of the Danish Golden-Age era.

In 1881, Matthison-Hansen succeeded Berggreen in the position at Trinity Church. Here, beginning in 1883, he held a number of 'organ lectures' where he presented the Copenhagen audience with not only the Classical repertoire but also contemporary music. In so doing he followed the pattern of public music education already successfully tried out in Copenhagen by H.C. Lumbye (1810-1874) at his orchestral Tivoli concerts, and by the Music Society under the direction of Gade. According to the Danish musicologist Claus Røllum-Larsen, Matthison-Hansen included his own Concerto, Op.15, three times during the course of his organ lectures: first in 1883 (though only the second movement, under the title Fantasy), then in 1885 and 1902. The Concerto probably dates from 1874 (again according to Røllum-Larsen) and so belongs to the beginning of the intensive period (1874-1877) in which the composer gave about one hundred organ recitals in various Danish towns.

Looking at Gottfred Matthison-Hansen in the company of his Danish fellow composers of the time it would not be wide of the mark to characterise him as a Late-Romantic; his Concerto is no Late-Romantic music, however. The work is highly regarded in organ circles both nationally and internationally, and there is no reason why it should not also find favour with a broad audience. It was first printed by Kahnt in Leipzig and bears a dedication to Carl Riedel (1827-1888), a German conductor, composer and Wagnerite. Grethe Krogh's recording follows the new Danish edition, prepared by Svend Prip, one of her many pupils among the leading Danish organists of today (Edition Egtved, 1987).

The Concerto is in three movements (D minor, F major and D minor, respectively). The first movement is dominated by a steady crotchet rhythm, and the alternations between heroic and lyrical inflections do not affect the overall character of the piece. The second movement is thoroughly serene and contemplative, but the admirable precision characterising the melodic gesture and the interlacing of lines and of rhythms ensure that never once does the music fall into a reverie or come anywhere near a standstill. The final movement is splendid yet brief and to the point; it is contrapuntally laid out and opens with an eight-bar theme with a touch of Danish hymnody to its final two phrases: or perhaps it is just a touch of Scandinavian folk music? Perceptive foreign listeners have been known to react to the Concerto by asking if perhaps Matthison-Hansen

knew Grieg. He did, in fact, both personally and musically. In the case of the Concerto, the Norwegian master's early collections of piano pieces might be worth looking at; they were printed mainly in Copenhagen.

COMMOTIO

While Gottfred Matthison-Hansen's Concerto, Op. 15, is glorious organ music it would nonetheless lend itself easily to transcription for symphonic band or orchestra. The idea of transcribing Carl Nielsen's late organ work, *Commotio*, for orchestra might strike one as being even more tempting, but the task would prove infinitely more difficult. Yet this first (and only) large organ work by Nielsen must surely also count as the Master's final word on the symphony as a genre.

With the exception of Kuhlau (1786-1832) and Lumbye, all of the truly significant 19th-century Danish composers also held important positions as organists in Copenhagen. Carl Nielsen (1865-1931) is, without discussion, the most prominent Danish composer ever, and he wrote what is presumably the longest and greatest single composition for the organ originating in Scandinavia. And yet Nielsen was never an organist (in fact, hardly even a pianist), and despite the many wonderful hymn tunes he wrote, he had no personal attachment to the church either. He intended his *Commotio* solely for concert use wherever a suitable instrument was available.

Used as the title of a serious-music composition, the word *commotio* may elicit a giggle from doctors and their secretaries, since *commotio cerebri* means concussion of the brain. What Nielsen had in mind, however, was movement: physical and intellectual movement. And once again his creative and intellectual powers allowed him to highlight, on one hand, the salient features of his own genius while inviting, on the other, his listeners to concentrate on salient features of Western classical music as such.

Commotio was composed in 1930-1931, following extensive studies of the organ literature (Bach, more than anyone else) and preceded by a collection of tiny organ preludes (1929-1930). Among Nielsen's major compositions, however, the important stepping-stones towards *Commotio* were the four large piano works (Chaconne, 1916; Theme with variations, 1917; the 'Luciferian' Suite, 1919-1920, and Three Piano Pieces, 1928) as well as Symphony No. 6 (1924-1925), the Flute Concerto (1926) and the Clarinet Concerto (1928). As with Grethe Krogh's previous two recordings of *Commotio*, the present one was made from the printed score edited by Emil Telmányi, Carl Nielsen's son-in-law and confidant (Samfundet til Udgivelse af Dansk Musik, 1932 and 1954). Grethe Krogh herself continues an authentic Danish *Commotio* tradition, inasmuch as she has discussed the work with the Danish organist Peter Thomsen (1893-1976), one of Nielsen's 'sparring partners' in organ affairs, and the one who was entrusted

to give the first (private) performance of *Commotio* at Christiansborg Castle Church in Copenhagen on 24 April 1931. Nielsen was present, of course, and so was one of his 'disciples', Mogens Wöldike (1897-1988), whom Grethe Krogh also had the opportunity to consult, later on.

For the organist as well as the listener, every encounter with *Commotio* represents a challenge. It is entirely possible to perform/evaluate this composition within the framework of Pre-Classical organ music, with its characteristic juxtaposition of prelude and fugue, but it is no less appropriate to perform/evaluate *Commotio* from the standpoint that it is indeed Nielsen's last substantial bid for a modern instrumental work written within the framework of the Classical-Romantic sonata tradition.

Nielsen was a true master of variations and other techniques of re-cycling. The work is one majestic 22-minute outpouring, from the grand opening to the breathtaking close. Note, however, that there is a dramatic pivot point in the eighth minute. It serves as the axis for a tight web of (more or less) symmetrically arranged recollections that spread on all levels of the composition. If, on the other hand, one chooses to consider the 'prelude and fugue' model, the dividing line is seen to come much later in the development of the *Commotio* structure. Despite a wealth of imitative passages till then, no less than 14 minutes must pass before we hear, for the first time, the

beautiful flowing and undulating theme destined to take the music forward-outwards, until finally stars and planets seem to rotate around us in a space all filled with sonorous light.

In a letter, Carl Nielsen wrote how he had counted the number of bars in *Commotio* and then realised that he had outdone Bach as a composer for the organ. Of course he was only joking. And of course the unsurpassable Cantor of St. Thomas and the great Buxtehude sit nodding their heads approvingly in their heaven each time a live performance or the playing of a recording reveal once again what riches the bristly-haired little Dane laid down in this his last great offering. Referring to *Commotio* in another letter, Nielsen stated, proudly and humbly, that he considered it his most accomplished work.

– Svend Ravnkilde. Copenhagen, June 1996

Grethe Krogh was Professor of Organ and Chairman of the Organ Department at the Royal Danish Academy of Music for several years. Prior to her appointment at the Academy, she was organist at the famous Holmens Church in Copenhagen. In 1990 she left the Academy to devote more time to her career as concert organist.

Grethe Krogh graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Music with degrees in piano, organ and harpsichord. Additional studies were undertaken with André Marchal in Paris.

An extensive concert career has taken Grethe Krogh throughout Europe, the former Soviet Union and the United States. She has served on juries for international organ competitions, including the prestigious Chartres and Nuremberg competitions. She is internationally acclaimed by critics for her performances and many recordings on Lyrichord Discs and EMI. She is especially recognized for her interpretation of Danish music and the organ works of Carl Nielsen. Her keen interest in contemporary music has led to many premiere performances of new works for organ.

She has attracted students from throughout Europe and the United States. Many of her students have distinguished themselves in national and international competitions and important collegiate and church positions. Grethe Krogh has received many honours and awards, including the coveted prize from the Copenhagen Music Critics and the Tagea Brandt's Prize of Honour.

Holmens Kirkes orgel:

Marcussen og Søn 1956; ældre facade (L. D. Kastens 1740) genanvendt; enkelte registre ændret og omintoneret 1980 – og orgelets registraturanlæg og bælje renoveret 1989 af samme; 50 stemmer. I 1995 er orgelets registratur fornyet med et kombinations-system (Jens Langvad) indeholdende 4 x 256 registreringsmuligheder på højre v.g. og 16 på venstre registertavle.

The Organ of Holmens Church

Built by Marcussen & Son, 1956; organ case by L. D. Kastens, 1740. The organ builder altered and revoiced a few stops in 1980, renovating the bellow and the draw-stop system in 1989. The organ has a total of 50 stops. In 1995 the draw-stop system was replaced by a sequencer (designed by Jens Langvad) offering 4 x 256 registration possibilities on the right jamb and 16 on the left jamb.

Disposition/Specifications:

Brystværk:

Spidsgamba 8'
 Gedakt 8'
 Principal 4'
 Rørfløjte 4'
 Blokfløjte 2'
 Waldfløjte 1'
 Nasat 2 2/3'
 Terts 1 3/5'
 Cymbel
 Vox Humana 8'
 Skalmje 8'

Pedal:

Principal 16'
 Subbas 16'
 Quint 10 2/3'
 Oktav 8'
 Gedakt 8'
 Oktav 4'
 Kobbelfløjte 4'
 Nathorn 2'
 Mixtur 6 kor
 Fagot 16'
 Basun 16'
 Trompet 8'
 Zink 4'

Hovedværk:

Quintatøn 16'
 Principal 8'
 Spidsfløjte 8'
 Gedakt 8'
 Oktav 4'
 Nathorn 4'
 Rørquint 2 2/3'
 Oktav 2'
 Fladfløjte 2'
 Mixtur 6 kor
 Scharf 4 kor
 Trompet 16'
 Trompet 8'

Omfang i manual: C-g3, i pedal C-f1. Normalkopler, svelle for Brystværk. Tremulanter i Rp. og Bv. Mekanisk traktur, elektrisk registratur; sløjfevindlader. Cymbelstjerne.

Manual compass: C-g3. Pedal compass: C-f1. Couplers: Bv-Hv, Rp-Hv, Bv-Ped, Hv-Ped, Rp-Ped. Brystværk enclosed in swell-box. Tremulants for Rygpositiv and Brystværk. Mechanical action. Electric stop action. Slider chests. Cymbelstjerne.

Rygpositiv:

Principal 8'
 Rørfløjte 8'
 Quintatøn 8'
 Oktav 4'
 Dækfløjte 4'
 Oktav 2'
 Gemshorn 2'
 Sesquialtera 2 kor
 Nasat 1 1/3'
 Scharf 4 kor
 Dulcian 16'
 Krumhorn 8'
 Regal 8'
 Klokkespil (c-c 3)





Gottfred Matthison-Hansen



Carl Nielsen

Gottfred Matthison-Hansen**(1832-1909)**

Concert for Organ, opus 15 (1874) 18:25

- [1] Allegro moderato 9:07
- [2] Andantino – Andante 4:33
- [3] Finale fugato – Maestoso 4:43

Carl Nielsen**(1865-1931)**

[4] Commotio, opus 58 (1930-31) 23:50

Grethe Krogh, organ
Holmens Church, Copenhagen



DACOCD 447

DIGITAL DDD

Total playing time
42:20

Recorded and
produced by
Peter Willemoës
Executive producer:
Jesper Buhl

DANACORD
Gørnersgade 35
DK-1319 Copenhagen
DENMARK
©DANACORD 1997

dana
cord