



Frederick Delius
Norwegian Masterworks

HENRIETTE -
BONDE-HANSEN

AARHUS
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

AARHUS UNIVERSITY CHOIR
HUMMERKØRET
AARHUS CHAMBER CHOIR

BO HOLTEN

Frederick Delius
Norwegian Masterworks



Frederick Delius

Frederick Delius (1862-1934)

[1] **Eventyr (1915/17) 15:20**

(‘Once upon a time’) –

after Asbjørnsen’s folklore

(Dedicated to Henry Wood) ©Stainer & Bell Ltd.

[2] **Sleigh Ride (1887 orch. 1889) 5:49**

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Five Songs from the Norwegian (1888)

(Dedicated to Nina Grieg)

(Orchestrated by Bo Holten)

[3] **Søvnens Engler 3:53**

Slumber Song (Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson)

[4] **Syng, syng Nattergal du 2:44**

The Nightingale (Theodor Kjerulf)

[5] **Jeg reiste en deilig Sommerkvæld 3:37**

Summer Eve (Johan Paulsen)

[6] **Længsel 3:19**

Longing (Theodor Kjerulf)

[7] **Solnedgang 5:00**

Sunset (Andreas Munch)

[8] **The Song of the High Hills 25:58**

(1911/12) ©Universal / Warner / Chappell Music

John Kjøller, tenor [8]

Helle Høyer Hansen, soprano [8]

Aarhus University Choir [8]

Hummerkoret [8]

Aarhus Chamber Choir [8]

(Chorus master: Bo Holten)

Henriette Bonde-Hansen, soprano

[3] - [7]

Aarhus Symphony Orchestra

Bo Holten, conductor

Recordings: Frichsparken, Aarhus, 19-23 May 2001

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Johan Christian Dahl (1788-1857)

Booklet: Aarhus Symphony Orchestra,

©Photo: Anders Bach

Inlaycard: ‘The Punishment of the Lustful’

Painting by Giovanni Segantini (1858-1899)

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This recording was made with assistance from the
Delius Trust

Each of the works featured on this recording may be seen as responses at particular periods of Delius's life to quite specific Norwegian stimuli. Of two early trips to Norway that Delius made as a young man there remains no first-hand record. They were probably relatively short in duration, made as errant tours while in Sweden on his father's business at the beginning of the 1880s; but they proved sufficient to instil in the youngster a mixture of awe and admiration of the country's scenic splendours and, at the same time, an empathy with so many of the people he met in the course of his travels.

In 1887, however, Norway was his sole destination as he set out on a summer vacation that neatly bisected the two student years he was then spending at the Leipzig Conservatory. So it was that at the age of 25 he spent some six weeks exploring the fjords, high moors and mountains that he would eventually come to regard as his spiritual home. Almost as soon as he arrived he was invited to a rural wedding, noting in his travel diary after he had met the bridegroom's parents how 'it really does one's heart good to meet such honest, unaffected & unspoiled people.' Two days on, and he resumed his journey, recording his impression of the high hills he was traversing:

Weather now very cloudy & the high mountains all hidden by mist. I have to cross the Ulvenaase, more than 3300 ft high, &

prepare for rather a wet time. Excessively steep, & after the last gaard is passed, scenery becomes more weird & rough. The view down towards Etne is magnificent. The sun for a moment flashes a few rays over the long valley. I, from amongst the clouds, look now on almost a fairylike scene - the light & shade effects I never saw before, but only for a few minutes, & then all is again bleak & misty, & I am getting wet through, with a cold wind sweeping down the mountain. At last I am at the top. Oh! how cold & bleak..... Now I descend, dripping wet & in a short time come, so to speak, out of the clouds, & have a magnificent view of Skånevik fjord, all coloured deep blue, for the sun is shining there. In a few moments I have come from winter to summer....

Returning to Leipzig for the autumn semester of 1887, Delius renewed Norwegian friendships that had for the most part been confirmed during his first year. Among his fellow-students were Camilla Jacobsen, a girlfriend to whom he was evidently quite close, Johan Halvorsen, Arve Arvesen, Halfdan Jebe, Hjalmar Borgstrøm, Iver Holter and Christian Sinding. Sinding, one of the closest of these Leipzig friends, introduced him to Nina and Edvard Grieg towards the end of the year. The Griegs had only recently arrived and would stay on well into April the following year, Grieg ostensibly looking to his

alma mater and to the town's busy musical life to refresh his ideas on orchestration. Mutual regard was rapidly established, Delius having loved Grieg's music since his childhood; and when he, Halvorsen and Sinding were invited to spend the evening of Christmas Eve with the Griegs at their lodgings, he brought his latest piano piece along with him, a piece that was quite possibly composed for the occasion. Entitled *Norwegian Sleigh Ride*, it conjoins memories, perhaps, of the snow mountains of high summer Norway with the reality of a more prosaic winter townscape of Leipzig, but of a Leipzig at least in holiday mood.

Grieg described that unique occasion as 'a feast I shall never forget.... After the meal we were all, without exception, plastered, but the programme had to be kept to and it offered music, music and still more music! What a Christmas Eve!.... Mr. Delius played a piano piece, which he called "Norwegische Schlittenfahrt", with great talent.'

The subsequent history of Delius's sprightly and tuneful **Sleigh Ride** is a tale, perhaps, of missed opportunity. The original piano version is long lost, but Delius orchestrated the piece in 1889, changing its title to *Winter Nacht [Winter Night]* and bracketing it together with two further pieces, composed the following year, *Sommer Nacht [Summer Night]* and *Frühlings Morgen [Spring Morning]*, under the MS cover title of *3 Symphonische Dichtungen*. All three

achieved first performance only in 1946, at Beecham's second Delius Festival: Richard Austin conducting on 18 November in London's Central Hall, Westminster, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. One cannot help but think that had *Sleigh Ride* been published in its orchestral form in the early years of the century, it would surely very soon have become a popular constituent of the light orchestral repertoire. It has subsequently been published and has also become available in a piano arrangement by Robert Threlfall (Boosey & Hawkes, 1978) that cannot be far, one feels, from Delius's original conception as played to Grieg in 1887.

Programmatically, we can look to Delius's own words, as prefixed (in German) to the manuscript of *Winter Night*. It tells us all we need to know about the piece.

One Christmas Eve I stood in the open air. The moon shone bright over a snow-covered landscape. The sound of an approaching sleigh was heard from a distance, but it soon rushed by and disappeared. And then gradually it was once more still and bright and beautiful.

* * * * *

In 1888, strongly encouraged by Delius, Grieg at last accepted an invitation from the Philharmonic Society to come to London and, for the first time in England, to play and

conduct in May works from his own pen. Delius's parents came down from Yorkshire to dine, together with their son, with the Griegs, and Grieg's high opinion, strongly expressed, of his young friend's musical ability proved sufficient to convince Julius Delius to settle an annual allowance on his son which would allow the aspiring but little-proved composer to live and work in Paris. Once established in the city in June, Delius wrote gratefully to Grieg: 'For you I have written two songs in remembrance.' More songs followed during the course of the summer, all set in German to originally Norwegian texts, and all were sent to Grieg for his appraisal. Most of them were dedicated to Nina Grieg. Still more songs followed in October, with Delius already thinking of gathering some of them together in an album, 'since they are nearly all written in one mood.' The poems, he told Grieg, 'appealed so much to me, and I was so much at home in them that I composed, without any hesitation, in the way that seemed most natural to me. All this we will discuss, so much do I attach to your criticism.'

In 'Over the Mountains High' Delius had in 1885 already set (in an unidentified English translation) four verses of a poem by Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson. Melodic but conventional, it can best be apostrophized as *salon fodder*, a musical genre that went far towards satisfying the tastes of late Victorian England.

From there it was a large step indeed to the accomplished series of Norwegian songs composed from 1888 to 1890, published in 1890 and 1892 respectively under the titles of **5 Songs from the Norwegian** and then *7 Songs from the Norwegian*. Almost all of the texts were selected from, and set in, the German translations of Edmund Lobedan, published in a single volume in Leipzig in 1881 - a book that Delius would certainly have come by during his time at the Conservatory. 'Write soon!' Grieg had commanded in August 1888. 'I am looking forward to the songs!' And in September came his reaction: *We are really delighted with your songs and my wife is most grateful to you for the dedication..... How strange that I have set nearly all the texts too. I find it very difficult to write and tell you all that I would like to say to you about the songs. But you will understand me better when we can meet and talk. There are so many beautiful and deeply felt things in them, - the passage*



I just cannot forget, and will certainly show you one day that I can steal after all. And then again there are other things which I find difficult to accept, not where ideas are

concerned, for you never lack inventiveness, but in the form and in the treatment of the voice. A Norwegian melody and a Wagnerian treatment of the voice are dangerous things indeed to try to reconcile. But we can discuss this. Perhaps I am too narrow-minded.

A few weeks later and the criticism is stilled:

Even without having received your kind letter, I would have written to you to say that on closer acquaintance I see your songs quite differently. The less flattering this fact is for me, the more so it is for you and for your songs. They show such fine feeling, and I shall never be so foolish as not to see that this is the main thing.

This cycle of five of Delius's earliest songs, dedicated to Nina Grieg and set to texts by Bjørnson, John Paulsen, Theodor Kjerulf (2) and Andreas Munch, has been specially orchestrated by Bo Holten and is sung in Norwegian. The songs are fresh and charming, written in a tonal language that is rooted in Grieg but that already already bears the imprint of the distinctive harmonic idiom by which we later come to recognize the unique voice of their composer.

* * * * *

In February 1911, two young Hungarian admirers of Delius had travelled from Budapest to Vienna to hear the first of two performances in the city that month of Delius's *A Mass of Life*. Before they set out on their return journey they sent a postcard to the composer to tell him of the 'deep impression' the work had made upon them. Zoltán Kodály wrote no more on the subject, but a little later Béla Bartók reflected in a letter to Delius on the sections of the Mass that had most moved him. He continued: 'the wordless choruses interested us greatly. We have heard nothing like it before. I think you are the first to have tried such an experiment. I think a lot more of this kind of thing - quite original effects - might be done.' Shortly afterwards he amplified his thoughts on Delius and his use of the wordless chorus in a long review article ('A Delius Premiere in Vienna') published in a Hungarian musical journal. Delius himself was to hear *A Mass of Life* again in October that same year when he travelled to Germany to hear his old friend and protagonist Hans Haym conduct a glittering performance of the work at the centenary festival of the Elberfeld Choral Society.

Between these two concert events had come a recuperative summer holiday in Norway, to add to the many Delius had spent in the country since first recording his experiences of the high northern mountains and precipice-curtained valleys in his travel

diary of 1887. This time his wife Jelka, as on some earlier occasions, was with him, but the call of the mountains was still strong for the lone wanderer: 'I take long walks paa Vidderne [on the mountain plateaus]', he wrote to Nina Grieg, 'and find it wonderful.'

So it is that we find that the distant mountains of Norway together with *A Mass of Life* revisited are to provide the inspiration for Delius's next composition, variously entitled, in sketches and drafts now made for the work, *Poem of the Mountains*, *Song of the Mountains*, *The Song of the Mountains* and still more. The wordless chorus is to be an instrument integral to the orchestra, and both the full score and one of the composer's drafts propose: 'Sing on the vowel which will produce the richest tone possible'. Delius began composing towards the end of the year, signalling the fact in a letter to Philip Heseltine dated 4 December 1911: 'I am working on a new choral work.' He rarely set down in writing any detail or description of his compositional processes and he seems largely to have abhorred discussion of the technical equipment required to produce choral and orchestral writing that, in his own case, was almost always of considerable originality. The result is that, as with so many of his other works, we have little record of his progress with **The Song of the High Hills** - only an occasional remark in letters to friends, and to Heseltine in particular, that he

is 'at work' on something new; and that is all. Just one reminiscence, however, points to an intriguing variation in his approach to this particular work. Eric Fenby, long after the composer's death, remembered how Delius had once told him how *The Song of the High Hills* 'was not going well', and how particular passages had eluded him, particularly 'the eight-part chorus that wouldn't come right.' But more significantly, Delius told him that this was the only work of his that he simply hadn't been able to bring himself to put aside. Other works would be set aside for weeks, months, perhaps even years, with the composer only coming back to them when interest or inspiration returned. Not so, though, with *The Song of the High Hills*. His absorption in the piece was, it seems, virtually complete from start to finish. He decides, for instance, not to travel to England for a performance of *Appalachia* ('my work prevents me from coming over'); and he apologises from time to time for delays in replying to letters, having been 'very busy with a new work' or 'because I am occupied with something very absorbing.' All the evidence points to *The Song of the High Hills* having been completed in the summer of 1912. It was certainly 'far advanced', as Delius wrote to Heseltine, in June. So it is that the dating of 1911 on the first page of the original publication provides an example of such a date preceding the actual completion of the work.

The Song of the High Hills was published by Leuckart in 1915, at a time when the serious diversions and insecurities of wartime would have made a first performance of this complex work a very distant possibility indeed. Delius had earlier confided the responsibility for making a two-handed piano arrangement of the piece to Philip Heseltine, who had completed it early in 1914, although it was to remain unpublished. It was followed in 1923 by a highly effective arrangement (also still unpublished) for two pianos, four hands, by Percy Grainger, after Delius had told Grainger: 'I think it is one of my works in which I have expressed myself most completely.' By then the first performance had long since been given - with the participation of the Philharmonic Choir - at a Royal Philharmonic Society concert in London on 26 February 1920. The venue was Queen's Hall and the conductor was Albert Coates. When asked for a programme note, Delius had written

I have tried to express the joy and exhilaration one feels in the Mountains and also the loneliness and melancholy of the high Solitudes and the grandeur of the wide far distances. The human voices represent man in Nature; an episode, which becomes fainter and then disappears altogether.

* * * * *

In the mid-nineteenth century Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Engebretsen Moe collected, recorded and published a whole range of Norwegian folk- and fairy-tales. Their publication was a landmark in Norwegian literature and, in one form or another, their collections have never since been out of print. Delius would have been familiar with many of these tales quite early on in his love-affair with Norway, but it was during the first winter of the World War - a winter which he and his wife spent in England - that he and Jelka together frequently read from a Norwegian-language volume of the tales. In the circumstances it must have seemed like a return to childhood innocence, far removed from the marching of soldiers and the distant sound of cannon fire that had caused them temporarily to quit their home in Grez-sur-Loing for the comparative calm of the home counties. Their exile from France would last for almost a year.

Delius's interest in these tales and in Norwegian folklore provided the stimulus for the last of his Norwegian compositions, and preliminary sketches for his tone-poem **Eventyr** date from the first half of 1915. By July that year they had, however, certainly been put aside, for he and Jelka left England for a three-month stay in neutral Norway. The following year saw the composition, back at home in Grez, of several major works ('there were always several scores on the stocks', as

Fenby reminds us), and it was not until around the beginning of 1917 that Delius took up his earlier sketches in order to concentrate once more on *Eventyr*, substantially completing the work in May. There was nonetheless a little rethinking to do, it seems, as it was not until 31 December that he wrote to Norman O'Neill; 'I have just finished a new work "Eventyr".'

Eventyr (Norw. folk- or fairy-tales) is perhaps misleadingly subtitled 'Once upon a time', a phrase liable to call to mind to English and other audiences the more prettified tales of childhood memory. But many of the Norwegian folk-tales that Delius knew so well were frequently robust and often frightening. They were tales of the supernatural that emerged from the fears and superstitions of earlier generations of Norwegian peasants: tales of giants and trolls, of 'under-earthly' creatures, of tall dark forests and of huge hidden caverns where helpless humans, once abducted, might be imprisoned. Princes and princesses are indeed there too, and there are touches of humour, but the Norwegian landscape in its threatening immensity is never far away.

All of this is reflected in Delius's extraordinarily inventive and undoubtedly attractive tone poem, replete with the robust character of its subject. Once again, it is the mood of the tales that is above all expressed in the music. In a recent essay, Barrie Iliffe has

isolated certain passages in the work that appear to refer to particular episodes in Asbjørnsen and Moe, but he makes no claims to support the notion of any narrative process analogous, for example to that of Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel* or other pieces dating back to the earlier heyday of the symphonic poem. One episode in the tale of 'The Widow's Son' appears definitively to present us with the source of the 'wild shout' that Delius, highly unusually, requires from '20 men's voices (behind) invisible', as the score laconically has it (the shout is repeated a few bars later). The boy who is the hero of the tale releases a magic horse that he has found imprisoned, and together they decide to escape, galloping off at a furious pace. The horse thinks that he can hear a noise from behind them and bids the lad to turn round to see if they are being pursued. 'Yes', comes the answer, 'there are ever so many coming after us, at least a score.' 'Aye, aye, that's the Troll coming,' says the horse; 'now he's after us with his pack.' Of course, just as things always should be, they escape, and the Troll and his followers are destroyed.

The score of *Eventyr* is dedicated to Henry Wood, who gave the first performance in London's Queen's Hall on 11 January 1919. When the piece was due to be given a decade later, again in London, during Beecham's first Delius Festival, Jelka sent to Philip Heseltine what effectively is a programme note by her on the work - a note, according to Delius, that

was 'quite perfect and expressed exactly what he had meant':

"Eventyr" is not based on any particular story of Asbjørnsen; it is a résumé-impression of the book..... [Asbjørnsen's are] the old legends still quite alive with lonely peasants, hunters and mountaineers. These people have a naïve belief in the "Underjordiske" (the Underearthy ones), Trolls, Heinzelmännchen, hobgoblins; who either help the humans or, if provoked, become very revengeful. A boy alone in a forest would imagine he heard them trotting after him, and get very frightened. At a wedding or Xmas meal a little dish of cream porridge is put on the loft for these underearthy ones, or else they might be offended - they have been known to fetch girls away (even the bride of a wedding) in such cases and dance with them furiously till they fall down unconscious. A hunter's luck would depend on their good or bad will. In the queer noises at night in lonely huts and woods you would imagine you heard the hordes of these mysterious beings galloping along in the distance.

* * * * *

Three last summers were to be spent by Delius and his wife in the Gudbrandsdal valley in 1921, 1922 and 1923, the latter two in a summer home that the composer himself had

arranged to have built, high up on the valley's slopes. From that time on, the illness and incapacity of his final years meant that there would be no return to Norway. Nonetheless, Delius regularly kept in touch with events in the country through the medium of Norwegian newspapers read to him at home by Jelka, a sequence only terminated a month before his death in June 1934. It would, I think, be fair to say that Delius's attitude to Norway and its peoples could no better have been summed up than in a letter he wrote to Grainger in 1918:

I should never think of settling too far from a big orchestra and chorus and also not too far from my beloved Norway and the light summer nights and all the poetry and melancholy of the Northern summer and the high mountain plateaus where humans are rare and more individual than in any other country in the world; and where they also have deeper and more silent feelings than any other people.

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A card party at Leipzig.

(l.to.r) Nina Grieg, Edvard Grieg, Johan Halvorsen, Fritz Delius, Christian Sinding
Coll. Delius Trust

[3] Søvnens Engler

Da Barnet sov in
Med Hånd under Kinn,
Kom Englene til
Med Latter og Spill.
Da Barnet det vågnet, stod Moderen over:
"Du smiler så vakkert, du små, når du sover."

Dets Mor gikk til Gud,
Og Barnet kom ud;
Det sovnet in
Med Tårer på Kinn,
Men hørte straks Latter og Moderord ømme;
Ti Englene fulgte med barnlige Drømme.

Snart blev det så stort,
At Tåren frøs bort;
Det sovnet in
Med Tanker i Sinn.
Men Englene veg ej; de svævede over,
Tok Tanken og hvisket: "Hav Fred, mens du sover!"

Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson

[4] Syng, syng Nattergal du

Syng, syng Nattergal du,
syng mig liflig en Vise:
kan du saa døve min Hu,
Kan du saa mage det nu,
At jeg maate Længsel forlise.
Syng, syng! Nattergal du!

Slumber Song

While infancy dreamed
From heaven there teemed
An Angel array
With song and with play.
And when he awoke his fond mother caressed him
In joy that he smiled as the bright angels blessed him.

To heaven was her prayer;
Mid sorrow and care
Unrestful he slept,
In slumber he wept.
A rustling was heard, and again she caressed him
In joy that the hovering angels had blessed him.

To manhood he grows,
The tear again flows;
No rest is in sleep,
His grief is too deep.
The angels desert not; still nearer they press him
And sing "Be at peace" as with slumber they bless him.

English version W. Grist

The Nightingale

Sing, sing, nightingale blest,
Sing me a rondel of gladness.
Wilt thou not bring me as guest
Peace in my bosom to rest?
Ah! why must I be ever in sadness?
Sing, sing, nightingale blest.

Syng, syng snart, er du snild;
Kom, kom let og behænde:
Abilden dufter dig til,
Natten er stille og mild,
Kind kysser Natten alt mild,
alle mine Tanker de brænder.
Syng, syng, snart er du snild;

Theodor Kjerulf

[5] Jeg reiste en deilig Sommerkvæld

Jeg reiste en deilig Sommerkvæld
igjennem en ensom Dal.
Saa blankt stod Fjeldet ved Solfaldstid
Og blaa var fjorden og grøn hver Lid,
mens Sommerluften
og Birkeduftten
strøg om mig blid.

En rankvoxt Jente med røde Baand
om Flettens vægtige Guld,
Paa Vangen sad med sit Strikketoi.
En Flok af Gjeder om hende fløi,
den Vogter stille,
mens Elv og Kilde
gled uden Støi.

Hvad mon hun tænkte, den Jente rank
i Somrens drømmende Kvæld?
Alene, ene i Dalen trang!
Mon Længslen ei over Fjeld sig svang?
Tys, Luren svarer!
Mod Fjeldet farer
en Vemods Klang.

John Paulsen

Sing, sing, chantress of love,
Sing, where 'tis fragrant and beaming.
Evening gales o'er me rove,
Gloom overshadows the grove.
Light alone springs from my dreaming.
Sing, sing, chantress of love.

English version W. Grist

a setting of the first two of Theodor Kjerulf's three verses

Summer Eve

At fall of glowing summer day
Through lone vale I take my way.
The waning sun gilds the lofty hill,
The banks are green and blue the rill,
The scented flowers
Perfume the bowers,
And all is still.

At house-door sits a graceful maid,
In ribbons golden bright arrayed,
And as her needle she plies, she heeds
Her flock that o'er the green hill feeds;
Its pathway guiding
To streamlet gliding
O'er grassy mead.

Of what dreams she, that maiden fair,
Out-gazing through the twilight air?
Though silent, she's not in heart alone,
Her fancy o'er the hill has flown;
Hark, distant singing,
Its echoes winging
In lovelorn tone.

English version W. Grist

[6] Længsel

Vildeste Fugl i Flugt endnu
fløi dog ikke som Længsels Hu,
Tid, kan du ikke ile!
Fra Morgen og indtil Morgengry,
det er som at lide Døden paany,
aldrig saa kommer Hvile!
Der er ei over det vide Hav,
der er ei i den dunkle Grav,
og ei paa Fjeld, og ei i Dal,
der er ei nogen større Kval
end Længsel!

Hjerte, mit Hjerte, styr ikke saa;
Tanke, Tanke hvorhen vil du gaa;
Drøm du bruger til Vinge!
Det ved den Lykke som ved sig stor,
at Kval er meer end de tomme Ord,
yndige Lyd som klinger.
Jo større Lykke, jo større Kval,
som høiest Fjeld og dybest Dal,
som Dag og Nat saa er min Hu;
mig tykkes at jeg bærer nu
paa Længsel!

Theodor Kjerulf

Longing

Quick darts an eagle through the skies,
Yet not swift as my longing flies;
Speed on, time! do not languish!
From ev'ning gray, till the ruddy morn
With mortal pangs I'm ever torn;
Never allayed is my anguish.
Where billows thunder and dash in might,
Where tombs are yawning in gloomy night,
Where valleys wind and mountains tower,
O'er all resistless reigns the power
Of longing.

Heart, oh! my heart thy throbbing stay.
Whither, fancy, thy rapid way?
Dreams but charm thee to vanish.
Her loftiest flight, well fortune knows,
But heralds grief and untold woes.
Love only sorrow can banish.
The greater the bliss, the deeper the pain,
As lofty hill and lowland plain.
As day and night, as ebb and flow
Within me burns the joy,
The woe of longing.

English version W. Grist

[7] Solnedgang

Nu daler Solen sagte ned
Bag Aasens fjerne Skove
Og sender guld rød Aftenfred
Udover Eng og Vove.
En sød, veemodig Hvisken gaar
Igjennem Birkens Blade
Om Nattens Mulm, som forestaar
Og vil sin Favn oplade.

Hvor Dagens Afskedstaare mild
På Blomst og Straa nu falder!
Konvalvens Kalk sig lukker til,
Endt er dens Livsensalder.
Nu tie ale Fugle smaa,
Og Dalen stille grunder
Ved hvad der nu skal følge paa
Naar Sol gaar ganske under.

Frygt ei min Sjæl, sænk dig kuns ned
I Nattens Dyb med Solen -
Derfra opvælder Kjærlighed
Som Duft fra Natviolen.
Hvor Lysets Kilde gaar forud
did kan du trøstig følge,
Og lade Nattens bløde Skrud
Din hede Længsel dølge.

Andreas Munch

Sunset

Now gently sinks the sun to rest,
The woods are draped in shadow.
Eve heralds night with radiance blest
Of golden lake and meadow.
With sad and sweetly whispering sounds
The peaceful woods are teeming
Amid the twilight that surrounds
And fills our soul with dreaming.

The farewell tears by daylight shed
On grass and flower are hoary,
The lily sleeping bows the head
And ends its day-brief glory.
The birds have ceased their merry lay,
The valley's joy is vanished,
How earth will fare, they wondering say
If light, if sun be banished.

Despair thou not but sink thou too
Where sun his course has taken;
From grave up-springs pure love anew,
As violets sweet awaken.
Where streams the light thy path to guide,
There fearless onward wend thee,
And should night's terrors round thee glide,
Kind heaven will guard and tend thee.

English version W. Grist

a setting of the first three of Andreas Munch's four verses

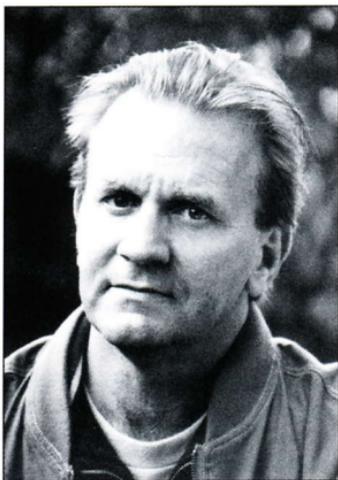


Photo: Eva Holten

Bo Holten

Bo Holten was born in 1948 and in his native Denmark he is equally known as a conductor and composer. In 1991 he was appointed Guest Conductor of the BBC Singers, London, with whom he has worked on a regular basis every year, giving some 70 concerts and radio recordings, including works with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and several BBC Promenade Concerts. In 2000 he also started to conduct the Nederlands Kammerkoor and the Swedish Radio Choir.

In 1979 he founded the vocal group Ars Nova with whom over some 17 years he undertook more than 500 concerts and 20 CD

recordings. In 1996 he founded the vocal ensemble Musica Ficta with whom he has now conducted about 160 concerts and theatre performances, and recorded 12 CDs. With this ensemble Bo Holten pursues his interest in Renaissance vocal polyphony and 20th century music - with ventures into the baroque period. He also continues to work with the rich heritage of Danish song - making high-quality recordings for a wide audience.

As a freelance conductor Bo Holten has guested a wide range of ensembles and choirs in Scandinavia and abroad. He is a regular visitor with most symphony orchestras in Denmark, often working with oratorios or contemporary music. This includes a series of collaborations with notable crossover composers like Jan Garbarek, Egberto Gismonti, Palle Mikkelborg and Barbara Thompson. Over the years Bo Holten has conducted more than 175 world premieres.

Bo Holten is also a prolific composer with more than 100 works on his work-list. Among these are 4 operas of which his third *Operation Orfeo*, is the most frequently performed contemporary Danish opera, with some 85 performances worldwide. He has also written two symphonies, four concertos and two musicals. Among his most widely performed music are the 20 a cappella works which span his whole composing career. There have also been songs, chamber music and many film and TV scores.

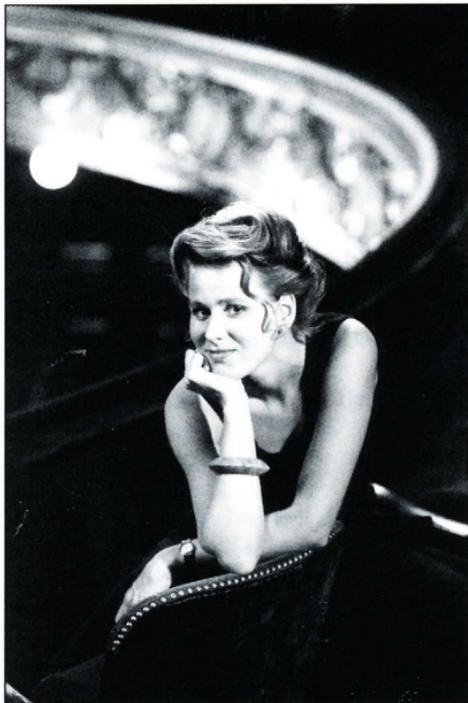


Photo: ©Miklos Szabo

Henriette Bonde-Hansen

Since her debut at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, Henriette Bonde-Hansen has shown herself to be one of the most promising young Danish singers. The soprano completed her singing studies at the Royal Academy of

Music in Copenhagen in 1991 and graduated in that city as an opera singer in 1993. In 1995 she was awarded the Danish Critics' Prize.

Henriette Bonde-Hansen has sung Nanetta (*Falstaff*) and Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen and the title role in Mozart's *Zaide* at the Opéra du Rhin in Strasbourg and at the Opéra National La Monnaie in Brussels. She performed the parts of Naiad (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) in Brussels, Waldvogel (*Siegfried*) at Den Norske Opera in Oslo, Adina (*L'Elisir d'Amore*) with the Canadian Opera Company and Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*) at the Staatstheater Stuttgart. In concert performances she has sung the title role in Charpentier's *Louise* and Micaëla in *Carmen*. She made her debut in the role of Valencienne (*The Merry Widow*) at the Opéra National de Paris, Bastille, where she was immediately re-invited to sing Frasquita (*Carmen*). She had a great success as Juliette in Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette* at the Opéra du Rhin in Strasbourg and as Susanna (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) at the Opéra National La Monnaie. She sang Adele (*Die Fledermaus*) in a Danish Television production.

Henriette Bonde-Hansen works with orchestras such as the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Danish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, Finnish National Orchestra, the Internationale Bach Akademie, l'Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, and

with conductors such as James Conlon, Charles Dutoit, Adam Fischer, Claus Peter Flor, Manfred Honeck, Mariss Jansons, Fabio Luisi, Sir Neville Marriner, Marc Minkowski, Helmut Rilling and Michael Schönwandt.

At the invitation of Adam Fischer she participated in performances and a CD-recording of Mozart's *Lucio Silla* (Cinna). In the near future Mozart's *Mitridate* (Aspasia), also under the baton of Adam Fischer, will be released on CD, as well as Cimarosa's *Les Horaces et les Curiaces* with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France conducted by Fabio Luisi (live recording) and Mozart's *Il Re Pastore* (Aminta) with the Danish Radio Sinfonietta, also under the baton of Adam Fischer.

Recently Henriette Bonde-Hansen finished a new production of Rossini's *Il Viaggio a Reims* in Toronto with the Canadian Opera Company and performances of *Der Rosenkavalier* (Sophie) with Scottish Opera, with performances in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Future opera engagements include Zdenka (*Arabella*) at Opéra National du Rhin in Strasbourg, Ilia in Mozart's *Idomeneo* at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Teatro Municipal in Santiago, Chile, Gilda (*Rigoletto*), again in Copenhagen, and the title role in Handel's *Semele* at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées with additional concert performances in London and Grenoble.

Henriette Bonde-Hansen recently made a very successful role debut as Adalgisa in *Norma* with the Danish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, upon which she was immediately re-invited to participate in an Opera Gala concert with a belcanto programme with the same orchestra.

Henriette Bonde-Hansen's recordings:

Songs by Delius: Danish Masterworks (Aarhus Symphony Orchestra) - Danacord
Mahler 8th (Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra) - Chandos
Salome (Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra) - Chandos
Maskarade (Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra) - Decca
Liden Kirsten (Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra) - Dacapo
Holger Danske (Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra) - Dacapo
Christus (Internationale Bach Akademie) - Hänssler Classic
Songs by Carl Nielsen (Odense Symphony Orchestra) - Kontrapunkt
Songs by Carl Nielsen (Aalborg Symphony Orchestra) - BIS
Songs by Schierbeck (Voice and Piano) - Dacapo

Aarhus Symphony Orchestra

Aarhus Symfoniorkester

Chief Conductor: James Loughran

General Manager: Leif V.S. Balthzersen

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The Aarhus Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1935, has established itself as one of the cultural flagships of the city of Aarhus. The artistic cornerstone of the orchestra's activities is the symphonic concert season. In addition to the main concert season, the multifaceted activities of the orchestra include a large number of family concerts, Saturday matinées, chamber concerts, summer concerts and free concerts in the foyer of the concert hall of Musikhuset Aarhus (Aarhus Concert Hall), which holds 1477 seats. Since its opening in 1982, Musikhuset Aarhus has been the main venue of the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra, but in addition to its home-based activities, the orchestra gives concerts in a number of venues throughout the country.

The Aarhus Symphony Orchestra offers a wide range of concert events, presenting a

varied concert repertoire, spanning music history from the baroque through classicism to Romantic and contemporary music and featuring Danish as well as foreign artists of international standard, among whom can be mentioned Maxim Vengerov, who will perform with the orchestra in the 2002/2003 season. Throughout its existence, the orchestra has premiered more than 120 works, and the orchestra commissions new works to be premiered every year, primarily by Danish composers.

Recording is another important element in the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra's activities. Two complete symphonic cycles have been recorded by the orchestra: Vagn Holmboe's symphonies (1992-1997) conducted by Owain Arwel Hughes, and Schubert's symphonies (released in the autumn of 2001), conducted by Hans Graf. The present recording of works of Norwegian inspiration by Frederick Delius follows a CD recording - also conducted by Bo Holten - comprising the complete music composed to Danish texts by Delius. This recording has won international acclaim and has been notably well received by the critics of a number of international magazines, among which *Gramophone* reviewed the recording in its "Editor's Choice" column in September 2000. Under the baton of Chief Conductor James Loughran Aarhus Symphony Orchestra has recorded the serenades of Brahms (1999) and Dvorák (2000), and a

recording of Rachmaninov's complete works for orchestra and piano with the Russian pianist Oleg Marshev and James Loughran has been completed in 2001 (DACOCD 582-583).

Internationally acclaimed Scottish conductor James Loughran has been the chief conductor of the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra since 1996, and a number of other distinguished conductors have held the post before him, including Ole Schmidt, Norman Del Mar, Jorma Panula and Eri Klas.

The Aarhus Symphony Orchestra gives concerts at the annual Aarhus-based NUMUS Festival of contemporary music; and also the Royal Academies of Music in Copenhagen and Aarhus are among the cultural institutions with which the orchestra co-operates on a regular basis. Co-operation with professional and amateur choirs, children's, choirs and youth choirs is another facet of the orchestra's activities. A very close and fruitful co-operation with Den Jyske Opera (The Danish National Opera) dates back as far as 1947, and has offered great artistic challenges and successes, including complete performances of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (1987 and 1996) and performances of operas by Richard Strauss: *Elektra*, *Salome* and *Die schweigsame Frau* (1998-2000). A cycle of Puccini operas launched in 2001 includes *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly* and in 2003 *La Bohème* with Angela Gheorghiu and Roberto Alagna. The Aarhus Symphony Orchestra has

also co-operated with the Royal Danish Ballet and the Leipzig Ballet.

The Aarhus Symphony Orchestra has toured Norway, Sweden, Finland, Canada, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Russia, Spain, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom and Germany and has given concerts at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival and the Edinburgh Festival. In May 2003 the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra will embark on a concert tour to China.

Aarhus Chamber Choir

Aarhus Kammerkor

The Aarhus Chamber Choir was founded in 1980 by its present conductor, Erik Bjørn Lund. The choir consists of some 25 singers and has given numerous concerts in Denmark and abroad, in Czechoslovakia, France, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Canada. In the spring of 1995 The Aarhus Chamber Choir represented Denmark at the European choir festival 'Printemps Résonance' in Toulon, France. The repertoire of the choir covers secular as well as church music and contemporary Danish and foreign music as well as earlier music. The Aarhus Chamber Choir has performed Bach's St. Matthew Passion and recently also the Christmas Oratorio with the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra. The discography of Aarhus Kammerkor includes Aarhus Symphony Orchestra's first recording of works by Delius.

Hummerkoret

Hummerkoret was founded in 1988 by its present conductor, Helle Høyer Hansen. The choir, which is associated with the Aarhus Music School, is a chamber choir consisting of some 35 singers, including a number of students. Since the creation of the choir its comprehensive activities has included co-operation with professional musicians and

soloists; thus the choir has often performed with the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra. In the autumn of 1997 the choir released a CD including a commissioned work by Michael Bojesen, who was awarded the title of Choir Composer of the Year in 1998. Among the activities of Hummerkoret a concert tour to Barcelona deserves a special mention.

Aarhus University Choir

Aarhus Universitetskor

The Aarhus University Choir, which is associated with the Department of Music at the University of Aarhus, was founded in 1995 by its present conductor, Carsten Seyer-Hansen. The choir consists of 29 singers, primarily university students. The choir gives 10-15 concerts every year in Denmark and abroad, has toured Sweden, the Netherlands, Italy, France and Poland, and has won several prizes at international competitions. The Aarhus University Choir has released two CD recordings of music by Britten, Frank Martin, Victoria, and Herman van Tooren. The choir has premiered a number of works by Danish composers and has won acclaim for its performances of 20th century music.





DACOCD 592

DIGITAL DDD

Total playing time
65:43

Recordings: Frichsparken,
Aarhus, 19-23 May 2001

Recording Producer and
Supervisor: Lennart Dehn

Balance Engineer,
Editing and Mastering:
Stephan Flock

Front cover: Painting by
Johan Christian Dahl

Executive Producer
Jesper Buhl

DANACORD
Nørregade 22

DK-1165 Copenhagen
DENMARK

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Frederick Delius (1862-1934)

[1] **Eventyr** 15:20
(*'Once upon a time'*) -
after Asbjørnsen's folklore (1915/17)

[2] **Sleigh Ride** (1887 orch. 1889) 5:49

Five Songs from the Norwegian (1888)
(Orchestrated by Bo Holten)

[3] **Søvnens Engler** 3:53
Slumber Song (Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson)

[4] **Syng, syng Nattergal du** 2:44
The Nightingale (Theodor Kjerulf)

[5] **Jeg reiste en deilig
Sommerkveld** 3:37
Summer Eve (Johan Paulsen)

[6] **Længsel** 3:19
Longing (Theodor Kjerulf)

[7] **Solnedgang** 5:00
Sunset (Andreas Munch)

[8] **The Song of the High Hills** 25:58
(1911/12)

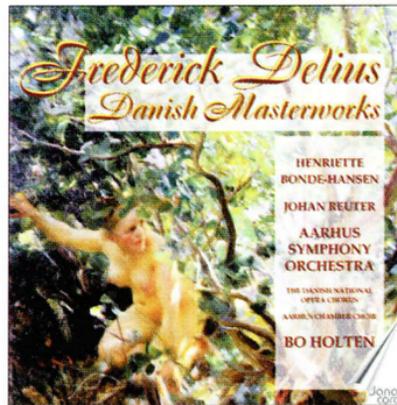
John Kjøller, tenor
Helle Høyer Hansen, soprano
Aarhus University Choir
Hummerkoret
Aarhus Chamber Choir



Henriette Bonde-Hansen, *soprano* [3] - [7]

Aarhus Symphony Orchestra

Bo Holten, conductor



DACOCD 536

Editor's Choice GRAMOPHONE

Disc of the Month CLASSIC CD

*It is some time since I have been so excited
by an all-Delius record.*

INTERNATIONAL RECORD REVIEW

Rare level of beauty...highly desirable programme
The Independent