

Mark Adderley

BITE THE DOG II

.....
Camilla Kjoll, violin
Telemark Chamber Orchestra
Lars-Erik ter Jung, conductor



Bite the Dog II

“I don’t start out with a prefabricated concept, because that would feel like a straitjacket – an impediment to my creative imagination. I need to leave space for spontaneous creativity. I don’t build the superstructure first, and then fill in the gaps; instead I let the music develop naturally of its own accord, with its own agenda, its own imperative! The overall structure is the space of time that the resulting music occupies.”

– Mark Adderley

It isn’t always that easy to get a composer to comment on his own music, let alone describe a recent work, or the composition process prior to its completion.

Meanwhile, the person commissioning the work – in this case me – tends to follow its journey to fruition very closely, and then generally premieres it and often records it. This also makes it difficult to describe the piece in words, because you are too close to the project, in the sense that you are so involved that you can no longer describe or explain the music in a sensible and reasonably objective manner. Perhaps. And of course there is no rule that says you have to explain it. But when you are dealing with a work of the magnitude of *Bite the Dog II* you really do want to say something meaningful, reflective of the huge amount of work and effort inevitably involved in a composition on such a grand, almost gigantic, scale.

This violin concerto by Mark Adderley (born 1960 in Coventry, England, since 1981 resident in Oslo, Norway) builds on *Bite the Dog* for solo violin, which he wrote for me in 2005. The “original” is a highly complex piece of music, and after its premiere the composer spontaneously exclaimed “This must be orchestrated!” Eight years later he has managed to do exactly that. The premiere of this elaborate version for violin and a chamber orchestra including strings, wind and percussion took place at Kampen church in Oslo on 7 April 2013.

The history of the piece is interesting in its own right: it tells us something about Mark Adderley as a person – about his playfulness, his flashes of inspiration and his impulsiveness. The work itself, meanwhile, gives us proof of his wit, abilities and talent. Over the course of the eight years that it took to write the piece, he shared his thoughts with me on a few occasions. On one occasion he told me in an email: *“I’m struggling to find something sensible to say about my own music, and feel that I’m not really qualified to do it. As I’ve previously said, I think that other people’s opinions are of limited help, as we all experience music in our own ways. The phrase ‘eclectic moment form’ perhaps gives a sense of how the music has been composed; it reflects the moment when it was written down, but its true meaning is a mystery to me! The virtuosity also expresses something about the nature of the music; as do the many stylistic references – although there isn’t a single quotation. Diversity and richness are two qualities that I strive for. Someone used the word ‘maximalism’ to describe me once, and I think that hits the mark!”*

– Mark Adderley

One of the features of Adderley’s music is its unpredictability, the contradictions, the sudden musical leaps and the seemingly absurd combinations. His music breaks with conventions about the ideal relationships between various structural elements; he is equally independent, or free, in relation to trends and genre influences – in so far as that is really possible. His music is powerful and emotional, being based more on intuition than on rigid systems. Nevertheless, it cannot be described as introverted or sentimental. One consequence of Adderley’s method of composing is that great virtuosity is required to play his music; his unpredictable and playful approach to musical elements is highly demanding for the performers.

The fact that I have so closely followed the composer’s struggle to complete the work, to deliver it, means that as a performer I have a special, personal relationship to it. Mark worked on the piece for a long time, generating a vast amount of

material along the way. This exhausting process has resulted in a concerto that is seemingly out of all proportion. So what gives coherence to this 45-minute long violin concerto? With the utmost respect for the work and its creation, I ask: is there any coherence? Have I seen it and understood it, as the conductor who will premiere it? It is tempting to highlight some of its key features, and hint at some possible conclusions. The work bears witness to the nature of its method of composition. Its disjointedness is one aspect of its expression, and it provides the framework in which all of the musical ideas take on meaning, on their own terms – as they are presented, one after the other. Why should music inspired by, and containing references to, bygone centuries necessarily maintain the clearly-defined structures of another age; surely it must be allowed to incorporate our modern freedom with respect to structure as one of its stylistic elements? That is what I think as a performer. But I also keep coming back to another question: is there really any point in discussing a work that has already had its premiere and been recorded? Perhaps delving and analysing one’s way ever deeper into the material, in an attempt to understand this imposing work even better, is making a virtue out of necessity, when faced with a concerto whose form is defined by its formlessness, in the tradition of various other bold violin concertos, such as Allan Pettersson’s. To place this all in a wider context, and at risk of getting myself into a quagmire of intellectual rationalisation: does speaking of music as a process – one that continues even after the composer has completed his labour – give a sense of the complexity of the composition process, in terms of delivering a testimony?

Adderley has created a complex and challenging concerto, full of wit, energy and diversity. It is also a very demanding piece for the musicians. Moreover, it poses challenges of a practical nature, particularly for a project-based ensemble with fewer regular musicians than a standing orchestra, an issue further complicated by our decision to record it in conjunction with the premiere. Recording a complex work like *Bite the Dog II*

allows you to bring the music to life in a new and different way. The sound cannot and shouldn't replicate the concert hall experience; the direct contact with sounds in a room – the sensuality, the physicality, that “live” feel – must be replaced with something else. There is a parallel with the visual arts here, to the extent that we sense a visual dimension in this world of sound: the closeness and richness of detail of a recording can bring the listeners nearer to the energy of the music.

Once you have listened to *Bite the Dog II* you will understand why its creator wishes to step out of the limelight without commenting on his work, so that the piece can lead its own life – to the joy, wonder and perhaps even frustration of its listeners. It will undoubtedly always remain a constant challenge to listeners and performers alike.

Mark has bitten the dog. And all of us who have been involved in this project feel that there has been plenty to get our teeth into. Hopefully no-one has been mauled in the process.

Lars-Erik ter Jung, November 2013

CAMILLA KJØLL, recently appointed 1st concert master of the Norwegian Opera & Ballet is, despite her young age, established as a renowned and sought-after soloist and chamber musician. She has held recitals at numerous international festivals and performed both as a soloist and as a member of the major chamber orchestras and symphonic orchestras in her native Norway. Notable performances at DNO&B include the demanding violin stage role in Berg's *Lulu* in 2010, to critical acclaim.

In 2013 Camilla Kjøll premiered *Bite the Dog II* by Mark Adderley with the Telemark Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Lars-Erik ter Jung. In the autumn of 2013 she was engaged by the Barratt Due Institute of Music in Oslo as a violin and chamber music teacher.

Kjøll currently plays on a Giovanni Battista Guadagnini violin (1747) courtesy of Dextra Musica/Sparebankstiftelsen.

THE TELEMAR CHAMBER ORCHESTRA was established in 1992, and its main ambition is to present music at a high level in the Telemark region. The orchestra has in recent years achieved a remarkable position in the Norwegian music life, and stands out as an active commissioner of new works by composers such as Antonio Bibalo, Bjørn Kruse and Gisle Kverndokk. At the Ultima Festival in 2011 the TCO premiered works by Olav Anton Thommessen, Bent Sørensen and Simon Steen-Andersen. In Telemark the orchestra has for more than two decades been a major contributor to the classical music tradition in the region, always aiming for the highest quality in its performances. TCO has been part of successful projects such as the chamber opera *Benk med og utan hund* by Ragnar Hovland and Jon Rørmark (2004) and the family musical *Billenes Bryllup* by Gro Dahle and Guttorm Guttormsen (2001).

In the 1990s the orchestra made a tour of all the elementary schools in the region. In addition to a number of collaborative projects and extensive tours in Telemark, the orchestra also has a national orientation, particularly since the CD *Passione* was released in 2010. The recording, with music by Haydn, Elgar and Mozart, received international acclaim, and marked the orchestra's solid foundation in the core classical string

repertory. The orchestra's first recording *Nostos* with Henrik Ødegaard's *Nyslått: Concerto for two fiddles and string orchestra* was released in 2005. Telemark Chamber Orchestra is a recipient of regular funding by Telemark Fylkeskommune and the Arts Council Norway.

LARS-ERIK TER JUNG has, as artistic director of Telemark Chamber Orchestra since its beginnings in 1992, built the ensemble to its present high quality standard and reputation. Contemporary music has played a significant part in ter Jung's career as a violinist and conductor. This orientation is reflected in the profile of the TCO, and his efforts to bring the orchestra to the contemporary music scenes in Norway is further proof of this long lasting engagement for the new music. After a substantial career as one of Norway's most profiled violinists since the early 1980s, ter Jung has achieved great recognition as a conductor and has comprehensive experience conducting a wide range of repertory, with, among others, the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra and the Oslo Sinfonietta.

As artistic director of the Sinfonietta of the Opera in Kristiansund, he also conducts opera and ballet. ter Jung was concertmaster of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra for 12 years. Since 1994 he has been a freelancer, realizing numerous solo, ensemble and orchestra projects. His conducting has taken him abroad on several occasions, leading him to among other places to Egypt, for concerts both with the BIT20 ensemble and later with the Cairo Symphony Orchestra. His cooperation with the contemporary music ensemble Asamisimasa has led to the Norwegian “Spelemann” award. ter Jung has made several recordings on the Fabra label with producer Geir Inge Lotsberg.

Mark Adderley (1960):
Bite the Dog II (2013)

1. Prologue	03:32
2. I.	11:11
3. II.	10:16
4. III	12:34
5. IV	04:00
6. Epilogue	04:50

Camilla Kjøll, violin
Telemark Chamber Orchestra
Lars-Erik ter Jung, conductor

Telemark Chamber Orchestra
Flute: Carina Sørum Ogaard
Oboe: Inga Hermichen Eeg-Henriksen Scheitz
Clarinet: Catherine Ramnefjell Leclerc
Bassoon: Embrik Snerte
Horn: Marie Solum Gran
Trumpet: Axel Sjøstedt
Percussion: Johanne Byhring
Violin: Bogumila Dowlasz (leader), Jonas Båtstrand, Agnes Hoffart, Ragnhild Lien, Aslak Juva, Ronnaug Flatin, Bård Winther-Andersen, Audun Hareide
Viola: Anders Rensvik, Åshild Nyhus, Pål Solbakk
Cello: Ingvild Nesdal Sandnes, Janusz Heinze
Bass: Kjetil Sandum

Recorded at Kampen kirke, April 8 - 9 2013
Recorded, produced and edited by Geir Inge Lotsberg
Notes by Lars-Erik ter Jung
Translation: Benedict Barclay for Språkverkstaden
Design by Erik Johan Worsøe Eriksen



This recording is supported by Arts Council Norway, the Norwegian Fund for performing artists and the Norwegian Society of Composers.

www.fabra.no

TONO/NCB

© + © Fabra 2013