

THOMM ESSENZ BIBALO LO

Thommesen/Bibalo

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Telemark Chamber Orchestra
Lars-Erik ter Jung, conductor
Poing
Ingrid Andsnes, piano

OLAV ANTON THOMMESSEN

Rapid Clouds

A lyric Pastel for String Orchestra and improvising soloists.

Why are there no concertos for improvising musicians and orchestra? I thought there was one, when I was working on my violin concerto BULLseye. The piece is a reworking of Ole Bull's First violin concerto, written when he was 24 years old. The score that I was presented with had no violin part. Did he improvise it? Was he perhaps afraid that his violinistic 'tricks' would be stolen by others? Needless to say, a solo part finally emerged in another copy.

But the question still fascinates me.

What if Gershwin had written an orchestral backdrop that an improvising jazz-artist could play upon? Or Ravel? Or Stravinsky? It is sadly strange that they, and anyone else, didn't.

In Norway, we are blessed with several serious-minded musicians who are well versed in the art of improvisation. An improvisation must always be elaborated on a pre-existing base. Without a base, we call it 'intuitive' music. Stockhausen's *Aus den Sieben Tage* invite musicians to explore this territory. But improvisation is something different. There has to be a base.

I decided to write one, an instrumental foundation upon which sensitive musicians could embellish and comment.

I found such performers in the group POING.

Olav Anton Thommessen

ANTONIO BIBALO

Concerto da Camera No 3

"to the Telemark Chamber Orchestra and Prof. Stefano Sacher"

Antonio Bibalo was born in Trieste, Italy, in 1922, and he studied piano at the local conservatory. As a 19-year-old he was called up to the Italian army, which also gave him a taste of life inside a prison camp when his country lost the war. Subsequently he continued his career as a pianist, as well as studying composition in London. In 1955 he took a holiday to Norway; he decided to stay, and settled near Larvik. He died in Norway on 20 June 2008.

Concerto da Camera No 3 was premiered at the Vestfold International Festival that same year by the Telemark Chamber Orchestra and the Norwegian Wind Ensemble.

When I called the composer in April 2008, to inform him that Concerto da Camera No 3 was finally going to be premiered, he was clearly surprised and delighted. That was because the piece, which had been commissioned by the Telemark Chamber Orchestra, had been left unused since its completion in the autumn of 2005 - due to various unfortunate circumstances. During the intervening years, the orchestra had somewhat anxiously wondered whether someone else would perform the work first, as the publisher had meanwhile made it available on the Internet. The original score had been safely kept in storage since it reached the orchestra on 6 December 2005, but in 2008 the time had finally come to dust it off in preparation for the premiere.

In Concerto da Camera No 3, Antonio Bibalo uses an unusual ensemble: woodwind, horn and trumpet soloists, together with percussion, kettledrums, strings and concertante piano. In this work of three movements, or "Etudes", the composer takes great delight in virtuoso orchestration. The piano is particularly evocative of a Baroque concerto grosso, but concertante elements can also be discerned from time to time in several of the wind voices.

The Norwegian composer Lasse Thoresen said that "There is a depth to Bibalo's life that we are given a glimpse of through his music. His encounter with the extremes of existence left traces in his works." I never met Antonio Bibalo. At the premiere, which took place two weeks too late for the composer to hear his last orchestral work performed, Thoresen's description seemed strangely apt, and when I introduced the work to the public, I said: "I feel that I have been able to meet Bibalo through my work on Concerto da Camera No 3, and he keeps revealing new sides of his personality in different parts of this piece. Particularly in the second movement you sense a depth that gives the work an additional dimension - one which makes it tempting to describe it, on an occasion like this, as the composer's requiem for himself."

Bibalo left behind an extensive oeuvre, with musical drama being the genre that he dedicated most of his energy to. His great sense of musical dramaturgy is also one of the prominent qualities of his instrumental works. In this third chamber concerto, where he draws inspiration from the golden age of music in his homeland, this quality combines with musical creativity and a highly personal expression to produce a striking legacy to posterity.

Lars-Erik ter Jung, November 2013

THE TELEMARK 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.

POING

Rolf-Erik Nystrøm: alto saxophone / sopranino saxophone
Frode Haltli: accordion
Håkon Thelin: double bass

POING started playing together in 1999, and have since been one of the leading ensembles for contemporary music in Scandinavia. They have played in clubs and concert halls in most European countries, the US as well as in China and Japan, with more than 70 first performances.

The three musicians are among the world's top performers on their instruments, both as interpreters of notated music and in the field of improvisation. Their unique flexibility has led to many untraditional commissions by composers and festivals that go beyond the usual interpretation, interaction and dissemination of contemporary music. For their ongoing commitment to contemporary music, POING were in 2009 awarded "Performer of the Year" by the Norwegian Society of Composers.

The trio collaborates regularly with musicians from around the world, with backgrounds from a variety of different genres ranging from folk and traditional, via popular music to experimental expressions. Among others, POING have collaborated with Swedish, Swiss, Nepali, Brazilian, American, Azerbaijani, Mongolian, Egyptian, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Iranian, Mauritanian, Ivorian, Tanzanian, Irish, Faroese, Icelandic, Finnish, Peruvian, Brazilian, Baltic, Sami, Russian and Spanish musicians.

In 2011, POING were artistic directors of the Ultima Festival in Oslo, the largest festival for contemporary music in Scandinavia.

Pianist **INGRID ANDSNES** (born 1978) is a highly acclaimed soloist and chamber musician in Norway and abroad. Ingrid has collaborated with some of the country's most renowned musicians, such as the soprano Solveig Kringlebotn, The Norwegian Soloist Choir, the violinist Arve Tellefsen, Berit Cardas and her brother Leif Ove Andsnes. She has performed at the classical music festivals in Norway, among these the Nordland Musikkfestuke, Olavsfestdagene in Trondheim, Bergen International Festival, Oslo Chamber Music Festival and Ultimafestivalen (Oslo Contemporary Music Festival).

In 2012 Ingrid was performing Beethoven's masterpiece *Diabelli variations* at The Norwegian Theatre in Oslo (Det Norske Teatret) in the play *33 Variations* by Moisés Kaufman. She has contributed on several recordings, including *Im Herbst* with The Norwegian Soloist Choir, and *Passione* with Telemark Chamber Orchestra, where she is performing Mozart's piano concerto no 12.

In 2003 Ingrid won the Janacek price at the International Rudolf Firkusny Competition in Prague, and she has received several national awards and scholarships for her work.

Ingrid Andsnes comes from the island of Karmøy at the western coast of Norway, and is now living in Oslo.

Olav Anton Thommessen (1946):

1. Rapid Clouds (2011) 14.54

Antonio Bibalo (1922 - 2008):

Concerto da Camera no 3 (2005)

2. 1° Etude. Overtüre - breve 02.55

3. 2° Etude. Largo melodico 10.55

4. 3° Etude. Capriccio rapsodico 05.39

Telemark Chamber Orchestra

Lars-Erik ter Jung, conductor

POING (1)

Rolf-Erik Nystrøm: alto saxophone / sopranino saxophone

Frode Haltli: accordion

Håkon Theelin: double bass

Ingrid Andsnes, piano (2-4)

Telemark Chamber Orchestra:

Flute: Carina Sørum Øgaard

Oboe: Inga Hermichen Eeg-Henriksen Scheitz

Clarinet: Catherine Ramnefjell Leclerc

Bassoon: Embrik Snerte

Horn: Benedicte Elnes

Trumpet: Axel Sjøstedt

Percussion: Daniel Paulsen, Anders Kregnes Hansen,
Håkon Skyberg

Violin: Bogumila Dowlasz (leader), Jonas Båtstrand,

Ingeborg Fimreite, Ragnhild Lien, Aslak Juva, Rønnaug

Flatin, Bård Winther-Andersen, Audun Hareide

Viola: Anders Rensvik, Åshild Nyhus, Marthe Husum

Cello: Ingvild Nesdal Sandnes, Janusz Heinze

Bass: Kjetil Sandum

Recorded at Kampen kirke, April 28 - 30, 2013

Recorded, produced and edited by Geir Inge Lotsberg

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Lars-Erik ter Jung

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