

# PORTRAYING PASSION

WORKS BY WEILL / PAUS / IVES

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TORA AUGESTAD MEZZO-SOPRANO  
OSLO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA  
JOSHUA WEILERSTEIN CONDUCTOR  
CHRISTIAN EGGEN CONDUCTOR





# FROM DISSONANT HISTORIES TO TRANSCENDENT ART

On the morning of 21 March 1933, the composer Kurt Weill received a telephone call at the home of his stage designer Casper Neher, whom he was visiting with his wife, the actor-singer Lotte Lenya. A friend working at a local police station notified him that the SS were on their way to apprehend him at his apartment, charging him with “Jewish cultural bolshevism” and of being a “degenerate artist.” Quickly, Weill gathered what he could into a small suitcase from his apartment before joining Lenya in Neher’s car, where together with Neher’s wife Erika they quickly made their escape towards the French border. On arriving, Lenya departed by train to Vienna, as she and Weill were in the middle of divorce proceedings (finalized on 18 September). Weill and the Neher’s arrived in Paris safely on 23 March. It would become his home for the next two years, where he would compose some of his most memorable works.

Weill did not arrive in Paris an unknown. His *Opéra de quat’sous* (*Three Penny Opera*) had been previously performed there on 14 October 1930 at the Theatre Montparnasse to critical and public acclaim. Its success had created further interest in his works, resulting in the wealthy Parisian patron of music, the Vicomte de Noailles, to write to Weill in Berlin in August of 1932 inviting him to perform other compositions in Paris. They agreed that Weill’s *Mahagonny* songspiel, *Der Jasager* and four pieces from *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* were to be performed in German concert form, with Lenya engaged as a soloist along with other artists imported from Berlin. On 11 December the concert was performed at the Salle Gaveau, conducted by Maurice Abravanel, resulting in unanimous critical praise. The impressive list of luminary cultural figures who attended was also noted, consisting of André Gide, Igor Stravinsky, Jean Cocteau, Fernand Léger, Darius Milhaud, and Pablo Picasso, among others. “It has been quite a few years since Paris has felt so intense and so noble a tremor,” wrote Emile Vuillermoz in *Candide* for his review on 15 December. Perhaps more significantly, was that the concert had been also attended by the wealthy Englishman Edward James, who was especially impressed by the composer.

Choreographer George Balanchine, who had formed the Les Ballets 1933 troupe in Paris together with artistic director Boris Kochno, sought out ballet works to perform for a showcase evening of new works. Edward James would be the generous backer, on condition that Weill must compose one of the works in the programme, and that his wife, the German dancer Tilly Losch, be offered one of the roles.

## KURT WEILL – THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

On 9 April James met with Weill and offered him a commission to compose a ballet. Weill’s terms for accepting was that his work not be an ordinary ballet but instead be a ballet with song and performed as story, complete with dance and acting singers. He also requested that Cocteau be the librettist, and that James also produce his first Paris concert in London while the ballet itself would also be performed there. Cocteau declined the offer citing time constraints and James suggested that instead Brecht be brought in on the project, as the public already were familiar with him through the *Opéra de quat’sous*. With an offer sent to Brecht, the plans for a *ballet chanté* (a sung ballet) could now move forward.

The commission to Brecht was something of an olive branch offered by Weill. The two had been engaged in antagonistic bickering and legal battles after their *Mahagonny* success. Violence had been threatened, and lawsuits engaged, as each demanded their respective contributions take precedence. Brecht, now living in exile in Switzerland and in need of funds, accepted the proposed offer. By 10 April he was in Paris to begin work on the libretto.

The difficulties were not over. Brecht argued with the production team over their concept for the ballet, ultimately threatening to leave the production altogether. Weill stepped in to offer a compromise, in that instead of the Freudian psychological plot of the split personality as wished for by Balanchine and Kochno, it could be further enhanced by Brecht’s critique of the individual existing in a capitalist society, thus maintaining his Marxist ideology. Brecht had been interested in the Marxist view of the personality formed by socioeconomic processes since 1926 and it can be found in many of his earlier plays. With the advent of psychoanalysis, the concept of the split-personality had been in vogue within the arts, so both Weill and Brecht were familiar with the concept. But Brecht’s libretto offered no stage or ballet directions of any kind, so Balanchine lessened its Marxist social criticism in exchange for the psychological disparity between the spirit and flesh. Indeed, Brecht had no hand in the staging or setting the scenario of the work.

The premiere of *The Seven Deadly Sins* occurred on 7 June 1933 at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris. The stage sets were created by Neher, with Balanchine responsible for all choreography, and Abravanel conducting. The two Annas were performed by Lenya, together with Tilly Losch with the Les Ballets 1933 troupe of dancers. Otto Pasetti and Albert Peters (tenors), Erich Fuchs (baritone), and Heinrich Gerler (bass) sang the roles of the Family, and the work was performed with five other short ballets set to music by Schubert, Milhaud, Saugeuet, Mozart, and Beethoven.

The press reviews the next day were mixed. It certainly didn’t help that the songs were sung in German, creating a language barrier that was imperceptible to most Frenchmen, and used a contradicting French title – *Les Sept Péchés Capitaux*. However, the audience response was overwhelmingly positive. It would receive a total of seven performances in Paris, ending on 19 June, with the production traveling onwards to London to open on 28 June at the Savoy Theatre, featuring the same cast as in Paris.

In London, the Lord Chamberlain’s Office insisted on changing the title to *Anna Anna*, fearful religious sensibilities would be offended. It received mostly negative reviews, with critics not understanding the text nor the work’s intent, nor Lenya’s broken English that she phonetically had learned before the performance. The work would only be performed one more time during Weill’s and Brecht’s lifetimes, at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen on 12 November 1936, and that production was halted due to the protests from the German ambassador. Also, Brecht was resentful that his billing was secondary to James’ and Kochno’s and dismissed the ballet as second rate. Weill responded that it was “the finest score I’ve written up to now.” It was to be the very last collaboration by Weill and Brecht.

By the summer of 1935, Lenya had reunited with Weill, each having abandoned their other romantic pursuits. As the Nazi terror approached, they emigrated to America, long mythologized in Brecht’s and Weill’s works, arriving in New York City on 10 September 1935. The two would remarry again in 1937. Like the two Annas, they had now come together, building a new home as Weill would embrace the style of the Broadway stage.

*Die sieben Todsünden* shows Weill at the peak of his European compositional style. The work is for large orchestra, fusing an alternating play between virtuosic strings and the wind section, into a lush and stylistically consistent work. He incorporates popular idioms such

as the shimmy, the march, foxtrot, waltz, and tarantella, and sets the jazz-referenced banjo against the opening clarinets, into a cantata-like musical score. Throughout, we experience unanticipated harmonic shifts and oscillating major-minor changes, simultaneously promoting both the satirical and the deadly serious using a classical symphonic methodology.

The scenes are provided commentary by Anna’s Family (mother, father, and two sons all sung by a male quartet), with the mother as a *basso profundo* exclaiming her anxious concerns. Together they caricature the German *Singverein* style, functioning as the voice of Anna’s Family, interjecting their critical observations of her journey abroad via their correspondence with her. Brecht’s hymnal prayers to the almighty dollar mocks the religious chorale through its use of its tragic-comic barber-shop-style commentary. Throughout, the performances are in typical Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt* (“distancing effect”) by all of the singers, underscored by the caustic satire of the text. Moral choices are equated as “sins” by Anna I and her family, and Anna II has no choice but to comply, in scenes where Brecht displays the seven sins as virtues. For him, a capitalist society forces the petite bourgeois to deny a natural life, resulting in the fragmented persona. The text reveals Brecht in his most minimalist style, with a characteristic cynicism set against Weill’s expressive melodic passages. It is this underlying tension in the work, enhanced by each resigned reply by Anna II to her sister, that engages the listener in deep empathy.

## SYNOPSIS

**Prologue:** Anna I introduces herself as the “practical” manager, and her dancer sister Anna II as the beautiful one, telling us they have set out from Louisiana four weeks prior, with the intention of earning enough money to send back to their family to build a small house beside the Mississippi. The journey will take seven years. Anna informs us that she is really one person, not two.

**Sloth (Unnamed City):** The Family sing of Anna as one and hope that she will soon show results in obtaining money for the house. The sisters engage in blackmail schemes on married couples in the first city they visit. Anna II grows tired of this and wishes to sleep, but is scolded by Anna I, reminding her of their goal. Anna II falls asleep on a park bench. Brecht makes a jibe to Christianity in the last strophe with a chorale-styled prayer by the Family for prosperity, richness, and happiness, repeated throughout the ballet.

**Pride (Memphis):** After Anna I has failed as a cabaret dancer in Memphis, Anna I encourages her to put aside her aspirations as an artist and to toss away her clothing for more applause. What use is pride, she asks, noting that it is only for the rich who can afford it. There is no use for artistic integrity if it does not lead to more income and your audience is uninterested. Anna II is goaded to set her pride aside and relinquish art, and become a nude dancer, set to Weill's harmonic setting of a waltz.

**Anger (Los Angeles):** The Family complains that Anna is not sending enough money. Now living in Los Angeles, the two Annas have found work as circus-film extras. Seeing a horse mistreated, Anna II protests the cruelty. Anna I admonishes her sister to accept injustice and brutality, noting that they will get no further in their goal if stopped by a troublesome morality. This only leads to loss of employment, as Anna II soon discovers. Anna II resigns herself by kissing her employer's hand and apologizes to get her job back.

**Gluuttony (Philadelphia):** The Family warns Anna of eating too much in her new position as a solo dancer in Philadelphia. They warn her of her greed, noting that her value is only as good as her waistline (stipulated by her contract) and attractiveness, limited to 110 pounds. They remind her of their house in Louisiana.

**Lust (Boston):** Anna I notes that unselfish love is in reality the sin of lust, as it brings in no money. To be dependent on no one is the best path, and it is better to accept money from men for love than to love. The profane view of the world is the only route to follow. The Family offer a prayer for prosperity and richness as the only true Way.

**Avarice (Baltimore):** The Family is delighted to find that Anna II is a celebrated star, and that her fame and mention in the newspapers will lead to more income. Men are killing themselves for her, and the Family warns that perhaps a little constraint might be needed to increase her income. The Father reaches a high A, reminding us to give and take, but not too much.

**Envy (San Francisco):** Anna II is weary, and envies those who are too proud to sell themselves, who rage against injustice, who can afford to be slothful, or who can indulge in true love. Anna I chastises her for being sentimental and self-indulgent, and to triumph over the desires of the human spirit. The Family reminds us that only by sacrificing the Self can one obtain the Reward.

**Epilogue (Louisiana):** After seven years of living in the cities, Anna I and Anna II return to their little house on the Mississippi, now having made their fortune from virtue and self-righteousness, or more to the point, the lack of it. Anna I asks, "Isn't that so?" Anna II replies, resigned, "Yes, Anna..."

#### MARCUS PAUS – HATE SONGS

Marcus Paus' *Hate Songs*, composed in 2013–14, received its premiere in 2014 with the Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Jonathan Stockhammer. Commissioned by mezzo-soprano Tora Augestad, Paus has created a work that displays the many nuanced qualities of her voice by scaling down its instruments from the full orchestra. Having previously written works using poems by the legendary and somewhat notorious writer Dorothy Parker, Paus chose to return again to her satirical poems for creating a composition reminiscent of the cabaret song. This sense of directness is enhanced by its use of *parlando* vocal lines and an allowance for tempo and dynamical *a piacere* phrasing in certain instrumental and vocal passages. Sectioned with three cadenzas, each serves to introduce a new poem by Parker, framed by the initial opening of lines taken from her *Men: A Hate Song* (1917). With its startling, angry declamation of "I hate men," repeated three times serving to link the work together, we are introduced to Parker's ironic complaint.

Each cadenza functions as a kind of satirical section before the introduction of a new poem. After the first cadenza we are introduced to Parker's *Men*, from her first published book of poetry *Enough Rope* (1926), and in the second cadenza two solos from the double bass and clarinet return us to the original poem, in select lines chosen by Paus. A muted trumpet enhances the cabaret-song atmosphere, taking us through shimmering string slurs and varied time changes. In turn, Parker's *Incurable*, from her *Sunset Gun* (1928), offers a bittersweet respite before delivering a more sinister mood elevated by somber strings. Cadanza three opens with the familiar "I hate men" repeated to emphasize its rage, and further into the section features a trumpet solo paraphrasing this vocal line, followed by an emotional, stark severity of only the voice and double bass. Part three issues in Parker's *Frustration* (also from *Sunset Gun*), in a building up of sarcastic bile and vehemence, ending to remind us of the singer's hatred of men once more. Scathing as it is humorous, the listener is left somewhat unsure of its intent, creating an anxiousness that the ironic Parker herself would no doubt have been delighted with.

#### CHARLES IVES – FIVE SONGS

Charles Ives's *Five Songs* are presented here in modern arrangements by John Adams. Long relegated to the margins of international concert programming, the past few decades have seen Ives' works claiming the rightful recognition they deserve. This highly innovative American composer is noted for his early compositional techniques such as the inclusion of chance, polytonal harmonies, atonal dissonance, and cluster tones, anticipating later music developments of the 20th Century. Encouraged by his father to experiment, Ives developed a self-referential style of quintessential American music, leaving behind the reliance on European styles of Romanticism that so many of his contemporaries emulated. His music is intimately bound to the American experience of church revivals, camp meetings, popular tunes, and off-hand references to European classical tradition. Yet his compositional style is based solely in the development of his own inner creative vision, strengthened by his adherence to New England Transcendentalism. Polytonality, microtones, and non-resolving dissonances characterize Ives' compositions, which Adams has reverently remained faithful to. These *Five Songs* derive from Ives' self-published collections of *114 Songs* and *Thirty-Four Songs* (1922).

#### Thoreau (1915)

Its opening broken chord set against the cluster of the orchestra followed by shimmering flutes and strings evokes the mysticism found in Transcendentalism, where divinity pervades in all of humanity and nature. Ives lightly paraphrases the text of Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*; or, *Life in the Woods* (1854), a central work in the philosophical movement he followed. Often referencing his other works, segments of this song can also be found in his *Sonata No. 2 for Piano* (1904–15).

#### Down East (1919)

Ives' own lyrics here provide a sense of nostalgia for some distant childhood memory, set to a melodic line that could have easily been written by Stephen Foster, the father of American parlor songs before the turn of the century. It displays Ives' willingness to allude to popular song, ingeniously incorporating it against an ethereal, dissonant backdrop.

#### Cradle Song (1919)

Ives has taken select stanzas from a larger poem written by one of his relatives, Augusta L. Ives, found originally in *The Musical Spelling Book* (1846). Ives owned a copy of this collection of children's songs. This lullaby

summons the sleep of autumn, as winter approaches and the falling leaves anticipate the changing of the seasons. Adams' arrangement remains faithful to Ives' modernist vision with the inclusion of bluesy-folk Americana, evident in the violin slides.

#### At the River (1916)

American clergyman and gospel song writer Robert Lowry wrote the original text set to his own tune *Beautiful River*, published in his *Happy Voices* (1865). Ives has taken segments of the text and arranged it from material he composed sometime during 1914–16 (drawing in part on material composed earlier in 1905). This practice of borrowing from his earlier compositions can be found in many of his works. The traditional down-home church melodies of small-town congregations, juxtaposed against minimalistic chord progressions, is a perfect example of the Ives style.

#### Serenity (1919)

Taken from an original poem *The Brewing of Soma*, written by John Greenleaf Whittier and first published in 1872. The following decades it had appeared in various forms as a hymn by other composers, ultimately finding its way into most Protestant hymnals by the turn of the century. Ives further edited down the text, selecting two stanzas from a hymn version rather than from the original poem.

Tora Augestad's repertoire selection for this CD takes the musical qualities of modernist, individualistic composers and places it squarely within the context of the twenty-first century. Paus' contemporary composition enhances the visionary dissonance of Ives as well as the contrasting melodic shifts of Weill's orchestrations, yet brings something entirely new to the equation, especially in its startling text and cabaret-like performance. Parker and Brecht could just as well walk arm in arm down the conceptual pathway of understated satire, counterbalanced by the ethereal, transcendental text of Ives' songs into a complimentary whole. Add Augestad's unique approach to these works into the equation, and the listener is served with a program certain to make them re-examine any former assumptions, and delight at the outcome. And therein lies the timeless dimension of this mezzo-soprano's considerable artistry. Enjoy!

– TOM GARRETSON



## TORA AUGESTAD

MEZZO-SOPRANO

Tora Augestad's versatility inspires composers, theatre directors, conductors, and fellow musicians alike. Her vocal capabilities defy easy classification: she is flexible, expressive yet precise, theatrically convincing with a compelling personality. Augestad (b. 1979) sings a broad variety of genres, primarily devoting herself to repertoire of the 20th and 21st centuries. She regularly commissions new works, amongst them a feministic chamber opera by Cecilie Ore that premiered at the Bergen International Festival in 2015. Since 2010 she has collaborated with the Swiss director Christoph Marthaler, spanning opera projects with music by Handel, Verdi, and Beat Furrer, to the playful combination of classical, jazz, cabaret, and pop music in Marthaler's own projects.

Born in Bergen, Norway, she studied classical music and jazz singing in Oslo and Stockholm before graduating with a master's degree in cabaret singing from the Norwegian Academy of Music. A fascination with German cabaret led her to Berlin where she has resided since 2007. In 2004 she founded the ensemble Music for a While with exquisite performers from the Norwegian music scene. Her ensemble, BOA explores the landscape between avant-garde and pop music. In 2015 she was nominated for the Nordic Council Music Prize. In addition, she works closely with the composer and saxophonist Trygve Seim. Since 2014, Tora Augestad is joint artistic director of the Hardanger Musikfest.

Augestad regularly performs with orchestras such as the Bergen Philharmonic, Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Bamberg and NDR Symphony Orchestras, Ensemble Modern, and Klangforum Wien. In 2019 she will make her debut at both the Philharmonie de Paris and Elbphilharmonie Hamburg with a world premiere by Philippe Manoury.

[www.toraaugestad.no](http://www.toraaugestad.no)

## JOSHUA WEILERSTEIN

CONDUCTOR

Joshua Weilerstein (b. 1987) is the Artistic Director of the Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne. Recognized for his integrity, clarity of musical expression, and profound, natural musicianship, he is committed to performing a wide range of repertoire and aims to bring new audiences into the concert hall.

He maintains a number of close relationships with leading international orchestras, including the Oslo Philharmonic, where he returns each season, the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Stockholm Philharmonic, and the Swedish Chamber Orchestra.

Weilerstein has also lead the London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Netherlands Philharmonic, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, NDR Hannover, SWR Stuttgart, Bamberg Symphony, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Czech Philharmonic, Lahti Symphony Orchestra, West Australian Symphony, and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. In North America, he has appeared with the Vancouver Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic, where he was Assistant and Associate Conductor.

In 2017, Weilerstein made his debut at the BBC Proms at London's Royal Albert Hall where he conducted the BBC Symphony Orchestra with his sister, Alisa Weilerstein as soloist.

Joshua Weilerstein believes passionately in programming traditional and contemporary repertoire side by side and aims to include a work by a living composer in each of his concert programs. He is a strong advocate for open communication between the stage and audience. In 2017 he launched *Sticky Notes: The Classical Music Podcast*, a podcast for music lovers of any level of expertise. He is accessible on social media for further discussion on all aspects of classical music and the experience of concert-going.

## CHRISTIAN EGGEN

CONDUCTOR

Conductor, composer, and pianist Christian Eggen (b. 1957) is one of the most influential figures on the Norwegian music scene. His field of expertise ranges from contemporary music via genre-merging projects, installations, television and radio drama productions to film, theatre, jazz, opera, and classical music.

As a conductor, he is known as one of Europe's finest interpreters of contemporary music and has worked closely with composers such as Morton Feldman, John Cage, and Helmut Lachenmann. As a conductor of the Ny Musikk Ensemble, The Norwegian Radio Orchestra, and later as permanent conductor and artistic director of Cikada and Oslo Sinfonietta, he has developed Norwegian sinfonietta repertoire since the early eighties and regularly appears on the European contemporary music scene with groups such as the Ensemble MusikFabrik and Ensemble InterContemporain. He has worked with many orchestras including the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala in Milan, and the Royal Philharmonic in London.

He has written music for a vast range of formations and settings. His first opera, *Franz Kafka Pictures*, received its complete world premiere at the Norwegian National Opera in the autumn of 2013. Sections of the opera have been performed since 2009. As a pianist, Eggen is internationally renowned for his interpretations of Mozart and Carl Nielsen, the latter presented on the recording *Carl Nielsen: Piano Music* on the Victoria label.

Christian Eggen has collaborated on a multitude of recordings within all aspects of his faceted musical career. He was the Festival Artist of the Year at the Bergen International Festival in 2007 and was appointed Commander of The Royal Norwegian Order of Saint Olav for his contribution to contemporary music in Norway and abroad.

## THE OSLO PHILHARMONIC

On 27 September 1919, a new orchestra took to the stage of the old Logan Hall in Oslo to give its first public concert. Conductor Georg Schnéevoigt presided over thrilling performances of Edvard Grieg's Piano Concerto and Christian Sinding's First Symphony. After forty years of making-do, the Norwegian capital had at last got the orchestra it deserved. The Oslo Philharmonic was born.

In the eight months that followed, the Oslo Philharmonic gave 135 concerts, most of which sold out. It tackled passionate Mahler, glistening Debussy and thrusting Nielsen. Soon, world famous musicians were coming to conduct it, relishing its youth and enthusiasm. Igor Stravinsky and Maurice Ravel visited Oslo to coach the musicians through brand new music. National broadcaster NRK began to hang microphones at the orchestra's concerts, transmitting them to the whole of Norway.

Over the next half-century, the Oslo Philharmonic's reputation grew steadily. Then, in 1979, it changed forever. A young Latvian arrived in Norway, taking the orchestra apart section-by-section, putting it back together a finely tuned machine with a whole new attitude. Under Mariss Jansons, the orchestra became a rival to the great Philharmonics of Vienna, Berlin and New York. It was soon playing everywhere, from Seattle to Salzburg, Lisbon to London. Back home in Oslo, it got a modern, permanent concert hall of its own. In 1986, EMI drew up the largest orchestral contract in its history, ensuring the world would hear the rich, visceral sound of the Oslo Philharmonic.

Three decades after that, the world is still listening. The Oslo Philharmonic retains its spirit of discovery and its reputation for finesse. Under Jukka-Pekka Saraste it cultivated even more the weight and depth that Jansons had instilled; under Chief Conductor Vasily Petrenko, it works at the highest levels of detail and style. Still the orchestra travels the globe, but it has never felt more at home. Its subscription season in Oslo features the best musicians in the business. Outdoor concerts attract tens of thousands; education and outreach programmes connect the orchestra with many hundreds more. In 2019/2020 the thriving city of Oslo will celebrate 100 years of the Oslo Philharmonic, the first-class orchestra it still deserves.



## MAGNUS STAVELAND

TENOR

The Norwegian Tenor Magnus Staveland (b. 1979) is renowned for his rich and varied artistry both as a singer and actor in a vast number of operatic roles. Staveland has appeared at opera houses and festivals such as Teatro alla Scala Milan, Teatro La Fenice Venice, Staatsoper Berlin, Opéra Garnier Paris, Théâtre de La Monnaie Brussels, Norwegian National Opera, Royal Danish Opera, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, and Innsbrucker Festwochen. He regularly works with conductors such as Rinaldo Alessandrini, Fabio Biondi, René Jacobs, Andrew Manze, Kent Nagano, Andrew Parrott, Christophe Rousset, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, and Marc Soustrot.

Staveland is also a much sought after concert and oratorio singer and regularly appears in concert venues and festivals throughout Europe and Asia. He has built an unusually vast concert repertoire that spans the early 17th century up to the contemporary.

## THORBJØRN GULBRANDSØY

TENOR

Norwegian tenor Thorbjørn Gulbrandsøy (b. 1979) lives in Amsterdam and performs regularly throughout Europe since graduating from The Royal Academy of Music in London. Thorbjørn has appeared with the Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Opera North, Grand Teatro del Liceu, and on numerous occasions with the Oslo and Bergen Philharmonics. Operatic roles include Pelléas in Independent Opera's production of *Pelléas et Mélisande* at Sadler's Wells Theatre in London, Rodolfo in *La Bohème* with Nationale Reisopera in Holland and on tour in the UK, Tenor 1 in Martin's *Le Vin Herbé* at Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, and Romeo in Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette* with Malmö Opera.

Additional highlights include Lili Boulanger's *Faust et Hélène* with the Oslo Philharmonic. From 2015-2017 he performed a variety of roles such as Vana Kundra in *Katja Kabanova*, Steuermann in *The Flying Dutchman* and Tamino in *The Magic Flute* at the Norwegian National Opera. Thorbjørn is a passionate lieder singer performing such repertoire as Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, *Liebeslieder-Walzer* by Brahms, and Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*.

## HALVOR FESTERVOLL MELIEN

BARITONE

The Norwegian baritone Halvor F. Melien (b. 1984) is a concert and opera singer performing all over Europe. His concert repertoire spans the 17th century up until the music of today, and he is particularly recognized for his Bach interpretations. Melien has worked with all of the Norwegian symphonic orchestras, BBC Philharmonic, Les Talens Lyriques, Concertgebouw Kammerorkest, Musica Saeculorum, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, The Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, Barokkanerne, and many others. He has also been part of the soloist ensemble at the Norwegian National Opera.

Melien works extensively with new music, and collaborations with composers such as Ørjan Matre, Eivind Buene, Øyvind Mæland, and John Frandsen have resulted in several world premieres and CD recordings. The German art song genre is particularly significant in Melien's career, and he is currently working on several Lied projects that include the music of Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Mahler, and Webern.

## OLLE HOLMGREN

BASS-BARITONE

Olle Holmgren (b. 1980) is from Borlänge, Sweden. He is a versatile singer and performs a variety of musical genres, from ballads, songs, and opera, to Lieder and ensemble work. He is a senior member of the Norwegian Soloist Choir since 2005. Olle has a passion for church music, and besides most of the well-known Oratorios and Cantatas, he frequently performs the roles of Rafael/Adam in Haydn's *The Creation*, and Jesus in Bach's *Passions*.

Additional highlights include the world premiere of Ragnar Söderlind's *Requiem*, the Scandinavian premiere of Lera Auerbach's opera *The Blind*, a performance of Sir John Stainer's *The Crucifixion*, the world premiere of Cecilie Ore's opera *Adam & Eve – a Divine Comedy*, at the Bergen International Festival and Ultima Oslo Contemporary Music Festival, and the world premiere of Kjell Habbestad's opera *Karlstad 1905*.

## KURT WEILL

Kurt Weill (1900–1950) is widely regarded as one of the great artistic voices of the first half of the 20th Century. Weill studied with Ferruccio Busoni in the early 1920s, and his collaboration with Bertolt Brecht brought him international fame already in 1928, first and foremost through their masterpiece *"The Threepenny Opera"* – a landmark in modern musical theatre. When Hitler came to power in 1933, Weill – who was Jewish – fled Germany, first to Paris, later to the USA. In New York, he found a new base for his work in the Broadway theaters, and became one of the most revered names of the music theatre scene. With an impeccable knack for melody and harmony, his songs have survived as standard repertoire for singers of all genres.

## MARCUS PAUS

Marcus Paus (b.1979) is one of the most sought after Norwegian composers of his generation. His catalog includes chamber music, solo works, choral music, concerti and other orchestral works, several operas, and works for stage and screen. Paus' work has been performed by leading artists and ensembles worldwide, in venues ranging from Carnegie Hall to Norwegian television, and he has fulfilled more than 50 commissions to date. Paus is a noted representative of a reorientation towards tonality and melody, and his works have been lauded worldwide for their expressivity and virtuosity. Unabashedly tuneful, Paus colors his canvas with a rich and eclectic palette, yet always with an unmistakable, darkly lyrical signature. Paus' works are published by Norsk Musikforlag AS.

## CHARLES IVES

Charles Ives (1874–1954), is widely regarded as one of the most extraordinarily gifted composers of the early 20th century. His father was a musician, renowned for his experiments with tone clusters, polytonality, quarter tones and using the acoustic spaces in the town. Largely self-taught as a composer, Charles Ives later incorporated many of these ideas in his own work, ideas which would later become standard techniques of contemporary music. In his adult life, Ives divided his energy between life as a successful insurance agent and as a composer. If there is one place to look for the source of Ives' originality, it is likely in the almost 160 songs he wrote. In these works, one can find his love for the tradition he grew up with: the church music and the hymn traditions of New England, the depiction of everyday life in a late 19th century small-town, along with cowboy songs and country ballads. Everything seems to find its direct expression in this unique collection of songs.







## KURT WEILL (1900–1950)

### DIE SIEBEN TODSÜNDEN

The Seven Deadly Sins

Text: Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956)

- 1| Prolog. Andante sostenuto (Anna I and Anna II) 03:33
- 2| Faulheit. Allegro vivace (Family) 04:15
- 3| Stolz. Allegretto, quasi Andantino (Anna I and Family) 04:30
- 4| Zorn. Molto agitato (Anna I, Anna II and Family) 04:45
- 5| Völlerei. Largo (Family) 03:32
- 6| Unzucht. Moderato (Anna I, Anna II and Family) 05:30
- 7| Habsucht. Allegro guisto (Family) 03:19
- 8| Neid. Allegro non troppo (Anna I and Family) 05:32
- 9| Epilog. Andante sostenuto (Anna I and Anna II) 01:31

## MARCUS PAUS (\*1979)

### HATE SONGS (2013–14)

for Voice & Orchestra

Text: Dorothy Parker (1893–1967)

- 10| Cadenza I 01:17
- 11| I. Men 01:33
- 12| Cadenza II 05:06
- 13| II. Incurable 05:26
- 14| Cadenza III 03:01
- 15| III. Frustration 01:53

## CHARLES IVES (1874–1954)

### FIVE SONGS

Arranged for Orchestra by John Adams

- 16| Thoreau (Text: Charles Ives / Henry David Thoreau) 02:30
- 17| At the River (Text: Robert Lowry) 01:27
- 18| Serenity (Text: John Greenleaf Whittier) 02:03
- 19| Down East (Text: Charles Ives) 02:36
- 20| Cradle Song (Text: Amelia Ives) 01:45

- 21| THE UNANSWERED QUESTION  
for Trumpet, Flute Quartet, and Strings (Late Version) 07:31

#### MALE QUARTET:

MAGNUS STAVELAND – TENOR 1

THORBJØRN GULDBRANDSØY – TENOR 2

HALVOR MELIEN – BARITONE

OLLE HOLMGREN – BASS-BARITONE

#### CONCERTMASTERS:

ELISE BÅTNES (WEILL: DIE SIEBEN TODSÜNDEN /  
IVES: THE UNANSWERED QUESTION)

PAULS EZERGAILIS (PAUS: HATE SONGS / IVES: FIVE SONGS)

#### SOLOISTS:

IVES: THE UNANSWERED QUESTION  
BRYNJAR KOLBERGSRUD – TRUMPET

PAUS: HATE SONGS

DAN STYFFE – DOUBLE BASS

BRYNJAR KOLBERGSRUD – TRUMPET

LEIF ARNE PEDERSEN – CLARINET

INGVILL HAFSKJOLD – CLARINET / BASS CLARINET

KATHARINA HAGER-SALTNES – CELLO

DAVID FRIEDEMANN STRUNCK – OBOE

BIRGITTE VOLAN HÅVIK – HARP

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