

**CLARE FARR**

# **Loudmouthed Beauty**

Concert Pieces for Bass Trombone



## Loudmouthed Beauty

*Despite its loudmouthed reputation, there is so much beauty in the bass trombone. The aim of this album is to showcase all the best sides of the bass trombone: robust yet fragile, colourful and flexible, juicy bass notes and beautiful melodies. By commissioning and playing new works and allying myself with great friends on trombone, organ, harp and piano, I have attempted to give new colour to the bass trombone repertoire. I hope the album can be of inspiration for many future bass trombone recitals.*

– Clare Farr



## About the Works:

**Lush darkness – glaring light (because the loudmouthed forgot the beauty of a simple tone)** Bente Leiknes Thorsen (b. 1980)

Bente's piece was commissioned for this recording with support from the Norwegian Composers' Fund. She says:

*When I write a piece for a musician I like to start with a conversation about the instrument, the music and life. I wanted to write a piece that embraces all that Clare was looking for in a solo work – something personal to her and at the same time a valuable addition to the solo repertoire. As the title implies the character of the work contrasts light and darkness, speed and calm. Maybe it also asks a question of virtuosity: Does it have to be loudmouthed, noisy rapidity or is there as much virtuosity in a calm awareness of sound and phrasing? I would like to swim in the word "lush" – just as in the sound of the bass trombone that Clare brings to life.*

### **Concerto in F major**

**Ernst Sachse** (1810–1849)

Ernst Sachse was a German virtuoso trumpet player and composer. According to records, he was also Principal Trombone for the premiere performance of Wagner's *Lohengrin*. He composed works for various brass instruments, and often featured as soloist in his own compositions. Being such a flexible musician himself, it would be nice to think that he would appreciate Inger-Lise Ulsrud's masterful organ registration that perfectly suits the changing moods of this piece.

### **Être ou ne pas être**

**Henri Tomasi** (1901–1971)

To be or not to be, that is the question Tomasi asked bass trombonists in 1963. Inspired by the monologue from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, he wrote this piece for trombone quartet. The bass trombone is given the role of Hamlet, taking centre stage and answering questions of life or death – an unusual role for most bass trombonists. Be inspired by your favourite actor, enter the stage and play as if your life depends on it!

### **The Daughters of Erda**

**Torstein Aagaard-Nilsen** (b. 1964)

*The Daughters of Erda* is a trilogy composed between 2001 and 2003. "Urd" is for solo bass trombone, commissioned by Clare Farr for her final master's recital in 2001. "Skuld", for solo tenor trombone, is written for the Danish trombonist Jesper Juul Windahl and "Verdande" is a duet for trombone and bass trombone.

Erda, the Norse Goddess of the Earth, is a character from Richard Wagner's perception of the Norse universe. She is the mother of the goddesses of fate that sit at the root of the sacred tree Yggdrasil, and who weave the life and fate of every human being. In the medieval Icelandic manuscript *Poetic Edda* the goddesses of fate, the Norns, are three women: Urd, Skuld and Verdande.

**Urd** represents the past. She has been given a piece of music that at times is raw and direct, but which also points ahead to life's opportunities. Urd's characteristics are brought to life through the bass trombone's breadth of sound.

**Skuld** represents the future. The movement is a musical speech, an explanation of deeds and a judgement over them. To reflect over our deeds, good as well as evil, is something we must do, even if the thread of thought dissolves in the end. The movement is played by Sverre Riise, tenor trombone.

**Verdande** connects Urd and Skuld in the present. The present cannot exist without the past, and the term "past" is formed in the future. For this reason, the norn Verdande is represented by a duet. Verdande fluctuates constantly between displaying an urge to be liked and sudden changes of character. Can we believe in her? Can we find peace in existence? This is probably one of the most central questions for humanity.

### **Sång till Lotta**

**Jan Sandström** (b. 1954)

Sandström wrote *A song for Lotta* in 1990 as a birthday present for the daughter of a good friend. His aim was to inspire her to continue practising and playing the trombone. That said, Lotta did not continue playing the trombone, but instead sought a slightly more important career working in the UN! The music lives on however, and is now a favourite concert piece for trombone and bass trombone players all over the world. Sidsel Walstad has transcribed the accompaniment for harp, and the result gives the work new colour and fragility.

### **Conversation**

**Charles Small** (1927–2017)

A conversation between good friends and colleagues can be so much: friendly, warm, fun, sometimes frustrating or even angry. One person may have more on their chest than the other, and occasionally we have the exact same conversation as we had yesterday. Picture all these conversations when you listen to this piece, played here by good friends and colleagues, Clare and Petter.

### **Concerto No. 1**

**Alexej Lebedjew** (1924–1993)

Lebedjew fought for the Red Army in WWII before dedicating his life to tuba playing and teaching. His first Concerto for Tuba has been adopted by bass trombone players all over the world and has become a cornerstone in bass trombone literature. The work's many technical and musical challenges have given the piece a reputation of being perfect for auditions, resulting in a tendency for the music often to be performed in a stressed frame of mind. The beautiful melodies and the Russian passion behind the notes deserve to be performed more often in a relaxed concert setting.





## Clare Farr

Clare was born in Stockport, England in 1975. Her musical career started at an early age playing piano and violin. It was after her family's move to Jørpeland, Norway in 1989 that she opted for the louder, more social life of the bass trombonist. Following bachelor studies in Stavanger and Manchester, she graduated with a master's degree from the Norwegian Academy of Music in 2001. Her teachers included Leif Værum Larsen, Aline Nistad and Ingemar Roos.

In her subsequent years as a freelance musician, she held long-term positions with the Oslo Philharmonic and Norrköping Symphony Orchestras, and regularly worked with many Norwegian and European orchestras and ensembles. She combined her work as a freelance musician with the position of General Manager of the Norwegian National Youth Orchestra until 2012.

Clare has been Principal Bass Trombone of the Norwegian Radio Orchestra since 2013. She is a founding member of the Norwegian Trombone Ensemble and is active as a conductor, teacher and adjudicator in the Norwegian brass and wind band community.

## Participating musicians (in track order):

**Inger-Lise Ulsrud** (organ, tracks 2–4) is Professor of Organ at the Norwegian Academy of Music and organist in Uranienborg Church in Oslo. She has performed extensively throughout Europe and Russia and regularly holds masterclasses in Norway and abroad. She is featured on many CD-recordings and has released several solo albums including *Olivier Messiaen: Early Organ Works* and *Kjell Mørk Karlsen: Meditatio*.

**The Norwegian Trombone Ensemble** (track 5) was formed in 2014 and consists of Audun Breen, Sverre Riise, Petter Winroth and Clare Farr. The four performers have extensive experience as soloists and chamber musicians and are some of Norway's most outstanding trombonists. Their highly acclaimed debut album *Nibbles* (LWC1194) was released in 2020.

**Sverre Riise** (trombone, tracks 7–8) studied at the Norwegian Academy of Music and graduated in 1996 with the highest honours. Sverre is currently Principal Trombone of the Norwegian Radio Orchestra and is Associate Professor of Trombone at the Norwegian Academy of Music. In 2015 he released his solo album *Snarks in the Kitchen*.

**Sidsel Walstad** (harp, track 9) is Principal Harp of the Norwegian Radio Orchestra. Her musical versatility has led to collaborations with musicians and artists of many different genres: Karpe, Stian Carstensen, Sissel Kyrkjebø and many others. Sidsel has released several solo albums, including *A New Start* and *Ginastera: Harp Concerto, Op. 25 / Variaciones concertantes, Op. 23* (LWC1182).

**Petter Winroth** (trombone, track 10) studied with Professor Ingemar Roos at the Gothenburg Music Academy and graduated in 2004. He won the position of Co-Principal Trombone of the Norwegian Radio Orchestra the same year. Petter is an exceptional arranger and is regularly commissioned to write for ensembles and orchestras of all sizes.

**Sigstein Folgerø** (piano, track 11) is Associate Professor of Accompaniment at the Norwegian Academy of Music. He is also an active freelance orchestral and ensemble musician. As a soloist he enjoys seeking out hidden gems in the piano literature, with a particular emphasis on transcriptions.

## Clare Farr

### – Bass Trombone

1. **Lush darkness – glaring light (because the loudmouthed forgot the beauty of a simple tone)** \_\_\_\_\_ 05:32  
Bente Leiknes Thorsen (\*1980)

### Concerto in F major

Ernst Sachse (1810–1849)

Organ: Inger-Lise Ulsrud

2. **I. Allegro maestoso** \_\_\_\_\_ 04:04
3. **II. Andante (adagio)** \_\_\_\_\_ 02:38
4. **III. Theme and Variations** \_\_\_\_\_ 04:16

5. **Être ou ne pas être** \_\_\_\_\_ 05:25  
Henri Tomasi (1901–1971)  
Norwegian Trombone Ensemble

### The Daughters of Erda

Torstein Aagaard-Nilsen (\*1964)

6. **Urd** \_\_\_\_\_ 05:11
7. **Skuld** \_\_\_\_\_ 05:30  
Solo Tenor Trombone: Sverre Riise
8. **Verdande** \_\_\_\_\_ 06:51  
Trombone: Sverre Riise

9. **Sång till Lotta** \_\_\_\_\_ 04:28  
Jan Sandström (\*1954)  
Harp: Sidsel Walstad

10. **Conversation** \_\_\_\_\_ 08:15  
Charles Small (1927–2017)  
Trombone: Petter Winroth

11. **Concerto No. 1** \_\_\_\_\_ 07:26  
Alexej Lebedjew (1924–1993)  
Piano: Sigstein Folgerø

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