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SUPER
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EDVARD GRIEG

Complete Symphonic Works

WDR

THE COLOGNE
BROADCASTS

CAMILLA TILLING
TOM ERIK LIE
HERBERT SCHUCH
WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln
EIVIND AADLAND

Symphonic Dances, Op. 64

- I. *Allegretto moderato e marcato* 8:13
- II. *Allegretto grazioso* 6:13
- III. *Allegro giocoso* 6:26
- IV. *Andante – Allegro molto e risoluto* 12:13

Peer Gynt Suite No.1, Op. 46

incidental music to Peer Gynt by Ibsen

- I. **Morning Mood** 4:04
- II. **The Death of Åse** 5:05
- III. **Anitra's Dance** 3:30
- IV. **In the Hall of the Mountain King** 2:32

Peer Gynt Suite No.2, Op. 55

incidental music to Peer Gynt by Ibsen

- I. **The Abduction of the Bride.**
Ingrid's Lament 4:39
- II. **Arabian Dance** 4:44
- III. **Peer Gynt's Homecoming.**
Stormy Evening on the Sea 2:49
- IV. **Solveig's Song** 5:38

Funeral March

in Memory of Rikard Nordraak EG 107

Slow 7:14

Two Elegiac Melodies, Op. 34

for string orchestra

Hjertesår (Heart Wounds). *Allegretto espressivo* 4:03

Våren (Last Spring). *Andante* 5:42

From Holberg's Time, Op. 40

Suite in the old style for string orchestra

Prelude. *Allegro vivace* 2:47

Saraband. *Andante* 4:26

Gavotte. *Allegretto – Musette. Poco più mosso* 3:29

Air. *Andante religioso* 6:18

Rigaudon. *Allegro con brio – Poco meno mosso* 3:58

Two Melodies, Op. 53

for string orchestra

Norsk (Norwegian). *Allegro risoluto* 4:24

Det første møte (First Encounter). *Lento* 4:41

Two Nordic Melodies, Op. 63

for string orchestra

I folketonestil (in Folk Style). *Andante* 7:32

Kulokk & Stabelåten (Cow-Call & Peasant Dance)

Kulokk. *Andantino* 2:28

Stabelåten. *Allegro molto vivace* 2:20

Concert Overture**'In Autumn', Op. 11**

Andante – Allegro agitato –

Allegro marcato e maestoso – molto animato 11:04

Lyric Suite, Op. 54

I. **Shepherd Boy** (Gjætergut).

Adantino espressivo 4:51

II. **Norwegian March** (Gangar).

Allegretto marcato 3:49

III. **Notturmo.** *Andante* 4:33

IV. **March of the Dwarfs** (Trolldtog).

Allegro marcato – Poco più lento – Tempo I 3:23

Klokkeklang, Op. 54, No. 6*Andante* 5:03**Old Norwegian Melody with Variations, Op. 51**

- I. *Poco tranquillo – Andante espressivo* 1:36
- II. *Poco Allegro, ma tranquillo* 0:35
- III. *Energico* 0:32
- IV. *Allegro leggiere* 0:35
- V. *Poco Andante* 1:14
- VI. *Maestoso* 1:11
- VII. *Allegro scherzando e leggiere* 0:42
- VIII. *Andante* 1:25
- IX. *Andante molto tranquillo* 1:57
- X. *Presto* 0:39
- XI. *Tempo di Menuetto* 1:56
- XII. *Allegro marcato* 0:41
- XIII. *Tempo di Valse* 1:11
- XIV. *Adagio molto espressivo* 2:38
- XV. *Finale. Allegro molto marcato – Pomposo – Prestissimo – Andante molto tranquillo* 5:41

Three Orchestral Pieces from 'Sigurd Jorsalfar', Op. 56

- I. **Prelude to Act I. In the King's Hall.** *Allegretto semplice* 3:51
- II. **Intermezzo. Borghild's Dream.**
Poco Andante – Allegro agitato – Andante espressivo 3:52
- III. **Homage March.**
Allegro molto – Allegretto marziale – Maestoso – Più mosso – Allegro molto – Allegretto marziale – Maestoso 9:10

Symphony in C minor, EG 119

- I. *Allegro molto* 12:31
- II. *Adagio espressivo* 7:21
- III. *Allegro energico – Più mosso – Tempo primo – Coda. Più allegro* 4:51
- IV. *Allegro molto vivace* 7:52

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16***

- I. *Allegro molto moderato – Cadenza – Poco più allegro* 12:57
- II. *Adagio* – 6:46
- III. *Allegro moderato molto e marcato – Quasi presto – Andante maestoso* 10:18

Music to Henrik Ibsen's Peer Gynt, Op. 23

- At the Wedding** (Act I, Prelude) 5:08
Dance of the Mountain King's Daughter (Act II, 6) 1:52

Six Orchestral Songs*

- Solveig's Song**, Op. 23 5:10
Solveig's Cradle Song, Op. 23 4:12
From Monte Pincio, Op. 39 No. 1 5:12
A Swan, Op. 25 No. 2 2:41
Last Spring, Op. 33 No. 2 5:41
Henrik Wergeland, Op. 58 No. 3 4:11

Two Lyric Pieces, Op. 68

- No. 4: Evening in the Mountains** 3:52
No. 5: At the Cradle 4:12

The Mountain Thrall, Op. 32 6:04****Norwegian Dances, Op. 35**

- I. *Allegro marcato* 6:35
- II. *Allegretto tranquillo e grazioso* 2:27
- III. *Allegro moderato alla Marcia* 3:14
- IV. *Allegro molto* 5:45

Camilla Tilling soprano***Tom Erik Lie** baritone****Herbert Schuch** piano***

“**D**uring the rehearsal a middle-aged gentleman entered the room; he was of very small stature, of frail appearance with uneven shoulders, and with flowing fair-haired curls and sparse, almost youthful, beard growth. Medium-sized eyes reminiscent of an innocent child’s gaze immediately captured the attention of the beholder.” This is how Peter Tchaikovsky described his first encounter with Edvard Grieg at the Leipzig home of the violinist Adolf Brodsky at the memorable occasion on New Year’s Day, 1888 when Johannes Brahms was also present. Tchaikovsky liked his Norwegian colleague, who had just premièred his third violin sonata with Brodsky at the Leipzig Gewandhaus and who was to undertake extensive tours abroad in the following years. At the age of forty-four, Grieg experienced the apex of his popularity amongst his fellow musicians. With his piano concerto and his incidental music to *Peer Gynt* by Ibsen he had conquered the concert platforms; his songs and *Lyric Pieces* for piano dominated music-making in the home on the continent and connoisseurs took delight in his string quartet and the sonatas for cello and violin. By the end of his life Grieg only owed his contemporaries a mature symphony (he had buried a youthful work in C minor in a drawer).

Despite their title, his *Symphonic Dances* Op. 64 were no real replacement for the large-scale orchestral genre, but instead were a dance suite for an opulently scored romantic orchestra. By 1896, eight years after the encounter with Tchaikovsky and Brahms in Leipzig, Grieg had already worked with the finest European orchestras of the time. Amongst them, three ensembles impressed him particularly: the venerable Gewandhaus Orchestra, with whom he had been familiar since his student days in Leipzig, the Vienna Philharmonic, and the newly founded Berlin Philharmonic whom Grieg had conducted in Copenhagen in the spring of 1896. It is possible that he had their sound in mind when he sketched the piano version for four hands of his *Symphonic Dances* in the autumn of the same year. Two years later, he completed the orchestral version. Once more, we encounter Grieg embracing nationalism, basing his musical language on Norwegian melodies and rhythms whilst increasingly adopting French influences harmonically. The four movements of the cycle are cast in a simple, tripartite form, with the relationship between the outer and central sections remaining flexible. Three times the middle section creates a contrast in a minor key to the festive (No 1), lyrically lilting (No 2) and waltz-like swaying (No 3) main sections. Only in the last, most extensive movement, which has an obvious finale character, does Grieg allow his orchestra to swell in a solemn manner, hinting at symphonic techniques. The middle section, however, calms down in a lyrical major key, following the example of a Norwegian wedding song. Here, as well as in the other movements, Grieg harks back to the collection of folk songs assembled by the organist Ludvig Mathias Lindeman, but it appears – as proved by the finale – that he is no longer concerned merely with “national authenticity”, but also with a new quality of his orchestral idiom which was inspired by César Franck’s *Symphony in D minor* and Tchaikovsky’s *Symphonie pathétique*. But how had Edvard Grieg developed up to this point?

He was born in Bergen on 15 June 1843, the son of a talented pianist and a merchant of Danish and Scottish descent (his great-grandfather spelled his name “Greig”). This city in eastern Norway and its environs remained an important biographical point of reference for Grieg: he grew up on the country estate of Landås, later on retreated to the grandiose beauty of the Hardangerfjord and lived in his country house at Troldhaugen from 1885. He studied piano and composition at the Leipzig Conservatoire, whose academic fustiness disappointed him, and in Copenhagen, where his friend Rikard Nordraak led him towards his native folk music which was to become the basis of his future style. “The scales fell from my eyes”, Grieg later summed up, “*only through him did I become acquainted with the Nordic folk songs and my own nature. We conspired against the effete Scandinavism introduced by Mendelssohn and enthusiastically followed this new path.*” For this purpose, Grieg and Nordraak – who were also close friends – founded the music society *Euterpe* in Copenhagen in 1865. Together with Nordraak, Grieg discovered an unused body of melodies and tonal systems whose exploitation during the time of Norwegian dependence upon Sweden (in 1815 Norway had entered a union with Sweden under Swedish supremacy) carried strong political traits. It therefore came as a great shock to Grieg when he heard of Nordraak’s premature death on 20 March 1866 whilst Grieg was travelling to Rome. The cause of death was tuberculosis of the lungs, and Grieg was inconsolable “He, my only friend, my only great hope for our Norwegian art! Oh! How dark it has suddenly become around me!” and composed a funeral march for Nordraak. The trio of this bleak march for piano, with its yearning, folk-like melody, evokes their combined efforts. Grieg later set it for wind instruments and percussion and asked for it to be played at his own funeral.

During his stay in Rome, Grieg met the dramatist Henrik Ibsen for the first time. Ibsen was working on his drama *Peer Gynt*, a satire on the political topics of the time and also of the Norwegian national character, portrayed (not particularly favourably) through the figure of the narrow-minded, boastful and rowdy egomaniac, *Peer Gynt*. Stemming from a disintegrated background and searching for the meaning of life in Norwegian woods and travelling even as far as the

Moroccan desert, Peer is driven internally and externally and tries to force his luck through diverse occupations and relationships with women. His doubts, however, multiply from act to act and when the devil, who appears as a “button-moulder”, calls him to account for his actions, he is left only with the love and forgiving of old Solveig. This work combines motifs from world literature, from *Don Juan* via *Faust* to the *Flying Dutchman*, in an idiosyncratic synthesis.

When Ibsen decided to stage his verse drama in 1874, only the Norwegian capital of Christiania (which was renamed Oslo in 1924) was deemed appropriate for the première, and only a Norwegian composer could be considered for the musical configuration. “I am planning to adapt *Peer Gynt* for the stage”, Ibsen wrote to Edvard Grieg from Dresden on 23 January 1874. “Would you like to write the necessary music for it?” Grieg, motivated by the honourable commission and the even more honourable fee, accepted at once. For the master of small, honed genres, incidental music was not only an opportunity to come closer to operatic music, but also proof of the popularity of musical interludes on stage in the nineteenth century. Grieg thus immediately sent to Ibsen detailed proposals regarding dances, melodramas and on- and off-stage choruses for *Peer Gynt*. The most interesting idea seems to be his suggestion (which was not realised) to replace the heavily cut fourth act with a “large tone painting” which would “depict *Peer Gynt’s wanderings through the wide world; American, English and French melodies could feature in it and return as motifs*”.

However, Grieg’s enthusiasm for the project was soon curbed: this “most unmusical of all subjects” became a laborious chore for him. In his instrumentation, which he completed on 27 July 1875 in Fredensborg near Copenhagen, he had to make allowances for the mediocre orchestra at the Christiania Theatre. The première on 24 February 1876, however, was a “continuous victory” whose sensational success was due the leading actor, Henrik Klausen, and Grieg’s music. Nonetheless, Grieg was dissatisfied with his music and was to change and re-orchestrate the score several times over the following years. Between 1888 and 1892 he extracted from the incidental music the two orchestral suites which have formed part of the core romantic repertoire ever since.

In Ibsen’s play, Act I serves to portray Peer Gynt, the daredevil, who keeps putting his beloved mother Åse to the test through foolish escapades (in the first act by stealing a bride, Ingrid, from her own wedding). Peer, for whom Ingrid is only one adventure amongst many, leaves the bride behind on her own in the mountains – she bewails her fate in the elegiac *Andante doloroso* (“The abduction of the bride. Ingrid’s lament”). Peer then goes on his wanderings and arrives at the “Hall of the Mountain King”. In this movement, perhaps the most famous movement in the entire *Peer Gynt* music, Grieg inserted a powerful crescendo which becomes increasingly ecstatic over the repetition of one single motif. During the incidental music this leads at its climax into a fierce chorus of the trolls. Ibsen’s drama continues in this style, eventually leading to Africa – indeed, the “Morning Mood” occurs not at a Norwegian fjord but on the coast of Morocco. Like the drama, the orchestral suites also close with the wonderfully poignant and reconciliatory song of the loving Solveig who, at the very end, rocks the returned Peer in her lap.

From language battle to periwig Edvard Grieg’s musical cosmos in his music for strings

When Eivind Aadland talks about Edvard Grieg, the latter does not only appear as an admired national composer of a country which is not especially rich in “great” composers. Rather, Grieg seems, for many Norwegian musicians, to be more of a family friend whose sounds have been in their blood since childhood and whom they like to visit every so often at his villa at Trolldhaugen, near Bergen. The Victorian-style timber house had been built to Grieg’s own designs and in the summer of 1885 he and his wife Nina (they had just recovered from a marriage crisis) had moved in. Eivind Aadland knows this property, which today houses the Grieg museum, very well. “I grew up in Bergen and in my youth would cycle to Trolldhaugen (which took fifteen minutes) to hear concerts at Grieg’s house. As a violinist, I loved to hear his chamber music; later I gave many concerts myself at the villa, playing his violin sonatas. The pianist played Grieg’s grand piano, of course, so I literally grew up with his own sounds.”

The close attachment of many Norwegians to Grieg’s music is based not only on instrumental works such as the piano concerto, the *Peer Gynt* Suite or the *Lyrical Pieces* for piano which brought worldwide fame to the composer. Grieg’s songs with piano accompaniment and his choral works – which are not so well known abroad due to the language – make up a central chapter in the cultural self-discovery of the Norwegians who in 1814 had shaken off centuries of Danish

rule, establishing a growing autonomy in their subsequent union with Sweden. The poets played a central part in this new national conscience, and the authors of Grieg's songs read like a *Who's who* of Norwegian literature – including Johan Paulsen, Henrik Ibsen and the Nobel laureate Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, who based his dramas and novels strongly on Norwegian history and lifestyle and also, as a politician, promoted Norwegian independence.

How much national politics influenced the language was demonstrated by the emergence of two Norwegian languages, the offshoots of which exist even today. Whereas the riksmål (“language of the realm”) furnished a fully Danish vocabulary with Norwegian pronunciation and grammar, the nationalist forces preferred the landsmål (“language of the land”, today's “new Norwegian”): an artificial written language without any Danish elements, constituted from the Norwegian dialects of the rural population. Grieg also became an enthusiastic advocate for the landsmål and set several poems by the poet Aasmund Olavson Vinje in the new language, and published twelve Vinje songs as his Op. 33. “In the spring of 1880, I was very excited to become acquainted with Vinje's poems, which are filled with great wisdom”, Grieg later explained to his American biographer, Henry T Finck. “Vinje came from a farming family. He tried to enlighten the Norwegian people with his prosaic writings which, as well as his poems, brought him great national importance.”

Three of his songs Op. 33 have been recorded here as arrangements for strings – an “export edition”, so to speak, for countries to whom the Norwegian language battle did not mean much but who appreciated the elegiac Nordic tone. The **Two Elegiac Melodies Op. 34** join the third and second songs, whose titles Grieg altered slightly. In the three verses of *Heart Wounds* he has the melody alternate between the violins and cellos; in *Last Spring*, a song on the ancient symbolism of blossoming nature and looking back on a fulfilled life, Grieg, in the second verse, experiments with the higher registers of the nine-part string orchestra, adopting an almost Wagnerian tone in the final section – surely an echo of his visit to Bayreuth in 1876. Completed in 1890, the **Two Melodies Op. 53** first of all present the Vinje song *The Goal* (Op. 33 No 12), which combines a dance-like verve with a soulful central section, under the more obliging title of *Norwegian*. The vocal archetype of *First Encounter* originates from the *Four Songs* Op. 21, setting texts by Bjørnson. Grieg, however, transforms the original into a genuine string sound-painting with luscious autumn colours.

Is such music, despite the amputated texts, still typically Norwegian – or does it, in fact, express an individual language? Grieg, a political sympathiser of the Norwegian cause, had always, as a composer, been indignant at being reduced to folklorism. When a Berlin music critic in 1889 called him the “Messiah of the Norwegian art of composition”, Grieg held the influences on his music by the “great trends of the time – i.e. cosmopolitan” – against this (well-intentioned) label. “However, and I am happy to admit this, I would never forcefully be able to tear out the roots which attach me to my homeland.” This ambivalent attitude between personal style and arranging folk or historic models was a defining feature of Grieg's oeuvre from the outset – including his “Suite in the old style”, **From Holberg's Time Op. 40**. “It is unfortunately not very complimentary of my art”, he wrote to his publisher, “that, of all pieces, it was the Holberg suite which was so successful, since I completely negated my own personality in it in order to shed some light on long gone times.” For Grieg himself the *Holberg Suite* was no key work of a musical restoration but merely a reverence towards the time of the baroque writer Ludvig Holberg in which the composer deliberately wore a stylistic mask.

Like Grieg, the Baron of Holberg (1684-1754) also came from Bergen – “this meeting place of all flesh that has spirit”, as Holberg put it in his autobiography. In the same volume of memoirs, published in new Latin (!) until 1743, one can read about Holberg's education in Copenhagen and Oxford, his grand tour to Germany, Italy and France and his post as university professor in Copenhagen. He became famous as the author of more than a dozen comedies whose waspish social criticism brought him the reputation of being the “Molière of the North”, but Holberg's literary capacities extended beyond this. According to the Scandinavian scholar Bernd Henningsen, “Holberg was, apart from writing his comedies, expert in practically everything. He wrote a *Description of Denmark and Norway*, a *General Church History*, the utopian novel *Niels Klim*, *Moral Thoughts*, Fables and in 1728 he even published *Two conversations on the East India Company*.” On the occasion of the bicentenary of the birth of this most important poet and thinker of the Nordic enlightenment (1884), celebrations were arranged in Bergen to which Grieg contributed a cantata and the piano suite *From Holberg's Time* which he arranged (in the same year) for string orchestra.

Grieg referred to the suite as his “periwig piece” and claimed it was “a good exercise in hiding one's own personality” – which does not mean that he intended merely to produce a bloodless copy of a style. Neither does the composer refer to a programme of particular Holberg works, nor is he guided by concrete musical examples, but he infuses his own language with several neo-baroque elements – as the Viennese music critic Eduard Hanslick aptly commented: “The ancient

facets are pertinently captured in forms, rhythms and ornaments, and yet they are filled with a modern spirit.” The Praeludium with its fanfare-like, propelling rhythm and blossoming string cantilenas hardly possesses any historic tinge; the following Sarabande borrows, at best, the solemn triple time and the figuration from its baroque example. In the Gavotte, with its characteristic anacrusis in 2/4, Grieg integrates a “Musette” which – named after French bagpipes – unfurls over drones in the lower strings. Gracious *rococo* ornaments do not relieve the ensuing Air of opulent romanticism, whilst the final Rigaudon appears, with its concertante treatment of a solo-violin and viola, as a mixture of a dance and concerto grosso where the machine-like, sparkling sound of the harpsichord is imitated.

The two **Nordic Melodies Op. 63**, written in 1895 and based on existing models, return once more to the two basic types of Norwegian folk music: the elegiac song and the dance. “In my father’s family there was a strong folk-music tradition”, Eivind Aadland recalls. “My grandfather was quite good at playing the Hardanger fiddle and on Aadland farm – Aadland means “land at the river” – fiddle music could often be heard, either by family members playing it, or through renditions on the radio. At every important occasion, from weddings to big family reunions, “slaatter” (fiddle tunes) would be played. I’m not so well-versed in it, but the sound of this music is in my blood.” This sound is particularly noticeable in the final *Peasant Dance* of Op. 63 which, along with the preceding *Cow-Call*, originated from Grieg’s *Norwegian Folk Tunes and Dances* Op. 17 for piano. The theme of the first piece, *In Folk Style*, however, was handed to the composer by the Norwegian-Swedish ambassador to Paris, Frederik Due: Grieg transformed the simple tune – faintly reminiscent of “Solveig’s song” from his incidental music to Ibsen’s *Peer Gynt* – into a symphonic string composition in four variations which, at its first performance in Christiania in October 1895, bore the suggestive title of *Legend*.

Roman Sketches

The Rome of the 1860s surely had not waited for Henrik Ibsen, Edvard Grieg and all the other Scandinavians who formed part of the international artists’ colony at the Tiber. Politically, Pope Pius IX, who still regarded Rome as the capital of his church state, felt threatened by the *Risorgimento* movement and the Italian kingdom under Piedmontese leadership which had been proclaimed in 1861. French protection forces were still securing the sovereignty of the Holy City, but following their departure in 1870, Italian soldiers were able to occupy the city. One year later, and with the general approval of its citizens, Rome was proclaimed the capital of unified Italy.

The 22-year-old Grieg would not have missed the birthing pains of the Italian nation when he travelled from Germany to Rome in the autumn of 1865. Whilst Venice, which he visited, still belonged to Austria, Tuscany and Emilia were already Italian, Florence being the provisional capital. The question as to whether Grieg’s Italian journey was also a form of escape is still discussed by his biographers. Rikard Nordraak, the great hope in the Norwegian national music movement, who was originally supposed to have accompanied Grieg on his travels, had to stay behind in Berlin due to illness. His death in the following March left Grieg with feelings of guilt for the rest of his life. However, the relationship with his fiancée, Nina Hagerup, was also not without difficulties which were to escalate several times, even after their wedding in 1867. His time in Rome was clearly quite turbulent and bore the character of suppression.

The yield of intensive musical work was thus relatively small and centred upon one work. “I have just finished a poem for orchestra, *In Autumn*, in which I took great interest”, Grieg wrote in March 1866 to Max Abraham, the director of Edition Peters in Leipzig, who later became his loyal publisher. Meanwhile, however, the composer was the only person to be interested in his tone poem, which he later published as a “Concert Overture”. The reaction of his Copenhagen mentor, Niels Wilhelm Gade, was condescending, and even though the piano reduction for four hands was awarded a prize by the Royal Academy in Stockholm (incidentally with Gade’s vote!), twenty years were to pass before Grieg took up the orchestral version again, revising it and conducting *In Autumn* for the first time at the Birmingham Triennial Music Festival on 29 August 1888.

The Concert Overture, which is based on the traditional sonata form rather than a concrete programme, opens with “rustic” drones and an elegiac song tune. In the *allegro* section, the lyrical atmosphere gives way to turbulent scenery reminiscent of elves’ or witches’ dances. In fact, Grieg almost exactly quotes his song *Autumn Storms* from his Op. 18, and makes considerable use of it in the development section. There is no calm secondary theme in this overture influenced by Schumann and Mendelssohn: for the most part, it charges along precipitously; occasionally, one can hear the elegiac melody of the introduction.

The accelerated coda quotes a Norwegian jumping dance which the composer called a “reaper’s song” – another explanation for the title of the work which evokes the classical elements associated with autumn (harvest and rural life, hunting and storms).

Departure towards Modernism

The Norwegian element which is hinted at in the concert overture, both in its lyrical (introduction) and its dance-like (stretto) variants, would become programmatic in Grieg’s later works: with his “national” manner and inspirations from folk music the composer sought to free himself of the “Leipzig style” which he had encountered during his studies in that city. His sixty-six *Lyric Pieces* for piano which were published in ten instalments between 1867 and 1901 exemplify Grieg’s attempts at fusing the romantic style of a Mendelssohn and a Schumann with the tradition of his homeland. The varied approaches of this fusion also become apparent in his fifth volume of his opus 54 (1891), which Grieg arranged for orchestra in the summer of 1904 – these arrangements were in part based on already existing transcriptions made by the Wagner conductor Anton Seidl who lived and worked in New York.

Whilst *Shepherd’s Boy*, which Grieg scored for just harp and strings, refers to the morbid aura of Richard Wagner’s *Tristan* and Franz Liszt’s late piano works, the rustic *Gangar* (which was called *Norwegian Peasants’ March* in the first edition) evokes a walking dance from West Norway. On the other hand, the following *Notturmo*, with a nightingale’s song from the flute, shows that Grieg, on his numerous concert tours, had not missed the harmonic and sonic innovations of a Debussy or Frederick Delius. The *March of the Dwarfs* (or rather: trolls) is a brilliant character piece whose orchestral savagery with a complete percussion section is reminiscent of the fast movements from Grieg’s *Peer Gynt Suite*.

Strangely, the 1905 edition of the *Lyric Pieces Op. 54* for orchestra does not include the movement where a surprisingly visionary trait of the otherwise rather conservative composer becomes apparent. “If people have heard *Bell Ringing* they’ll believe that I have gone crazy”, Grieg wrote in a letter to the suite’s dedicatee, the Dutch composer Julius Roentgen. Indeed, the fifths stacked on top of, and next to, each other which lend the piano version a certain onomatopoeic spice, almost burst tonality in their orchestral guise. The colourful use of the wind instruments, the harp’s sonorities, the dark grumble of the tom-tom and the high mixed sounds of the muted violins – all this reminds one more of the late Giacomo Puccini than a “Mendelssohn sewn into a seal skin”, as the critic Eduard Hanslick once referred to Grieg’s music.

Melody with Variations

Whilst the 1870s were shaped for Grieg by his directorship of the Philharmonic Society in Kristiania (Oslo from 1924) and his cooperation with the Norwegian playwrights Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson and Henrik Ibsen, during the 1880s the now internationally renowned artist devoted himself to the construction of his villa at Troldhaugen near Bergen and to concert tours which took him to Britain, Germany, Paris, Brussels and Vienna. A large number of piano and vocal works were written, whilst the great symphony and the opera were long in coming. His *Old Norwegian Melody with Variations*, Op. 51, which Grieg composed in 1890 at Troldhaugen, having returned from several tours, was originally conceived for the domestic combination of two pianos. It was not until between 1900 and 1903 that Grieg orchestrated – as he did with so many of his piano works – this set of variations, producing his most extensive (alongside his piano concerto) orchestral work. However, the first two conductors of the orchestral version, Johan Halvorsen and Johan Svendsen, advised him to shorten the piece, whereupon Grieg cut No 10 of the fourteen variations and abridged the finale.

As in his highly virtuosic *Ballad*, Op. 24, another set of variations, Grieg took the aforementioned melody from Ludvig Mathias Lindeman’s collection of folk songs: in Norway, it is still known as the famous tune *Sjugur aa Trollbrura* (Sigurd and the witch-bride) which has a bipartite construction with a ballad-like main section and a short conclusion. Grieg had initially arranged it in 1886 for his *Six Norwegian Mountain Melodies*, and even here he skirted around the home key of F major by using extravagant harmonisations, oscillating between major and minor, which he mostly maintained in the Variations Op. 51. The character, rhythm and atmosphere, on the other hand, are varied, similarly as in his *Lyric Pieces*. In so doing, Grieg created an entertaining series of romantic character pieces: there is the chivalrous riding piece (No 2) as well as delicate scherzo movements (Nos 3 and 6), languishing romances (Nos 4 and 8), magical fanfares (Nos 5 and 7), various dance forms and a pompous *adagio* (No 13). The finale is not so much a variation as a symphonic development; after a triumphant return of the theme it leads into a diabolical *prestissimo* tarantella, no doubt referring to the witch-bride. A gentle coda presents the theme newly harmonised and with a transfigured harp part.

Heading towards National Opera

“I don’t want to forget to mention a man who filled my musically empty years in Kristiania, 68-72, with his mighty personality – that was Bjørnson.” Perhaps Grieg would genuinely not have overcome his creative crisis around 1870 so swiftly had it not been for his acquaintance with, and support from, the poet Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, as he indicated to his first biographer Grønvold. Bjørnson, however, the bellicose journalist and playwright, enthused Grieg with the national cause and was convinced that music should play a part in it. The goal therefore, from the beginning, was a Norwegian national opera – a project which was begun in 1873 and which was centred around the partly historical, partly mythical figure of the Norwegian king Olav Trygvason. The opera, which remained a fragment due to the estrangement of Grieg and Bjørnson, was preceded by several preliminary works, including the immediately popular chorus for male voices, *Land-Sighting*, and the much more original melodrama *Bergliot*.

Grieg apparently also regarded his incidental music for Bjørnson’s history play *Sigurd Jorsalfar* (*Sigurd the Crusader*) as a preliminary exercise for the national opera (which was never written). The title character is the medieval King Sigurd I (c.1090-1130) who ruled Norway together with his brother Eystein and who became legendary thanks to his adventurous crusade from Norway, via England, the Iberian peninsula and Sicily, to the Holy Land. The play, premièred in April 1872, has since faded into obscurity. Grieg, however, revised three instrumental movements from *Sigurd Jorsalfar* when his Leipzig publisher pressed him for new orchestral works in the early 1890s: they were premièred in Kristiania on 5 November 1892. The tripartite work begins with the prelude to the second act, portraying, in the march-like outer section, the strident Sigurd and, in the idyllic middle section, his sensitive brother Eystein. This is followed by the scene *Borghild’s Dream*, whose drama is hardly comprehensible if one does not know that Borghild is in love with Eystein but is then forced to learn that he is already promised to someone else. The concluding *Homage March*, one of Grieg’s most popular pieces, accompanies the reconciliation between the two royal brothers in the final act. Grieg had reworked this substantially, using four solo cellos for an effective build-up from the beginning to the majestic triumphant flourish at the end.

The forgotten great work

Edvard Grieg’s only two orchestral works in the multiple movement formats of concerto and symphony – with which a nineteenth century composer could cause a furore – were written during his first mature period. Whilst he certainly composed multi-movement chamber music later on (including sonatas for violin and cello as well as the string quartet of 1878), in orchestral music he was to restrict himself to single movements or suites which mostly had a folklore background. Grieg clearly had to struggle with strong emotions, self-doubts and crises from an early age. Was this the reason for the fact that his Symphony in C minor was to remain his only one? Or did he feel that the symphony genre had become outdated, thus preferring poetic miniatures and programmatic music à la Franz Liszt?

His only symphony was written in Copenhagen – an important time for Grieg, as he studied Norwegian folk music intensively for the first time – thanks to the request, as Grieg himself remembered, of Niels Wilhelm Gade, the greatest Danish symphonic composer at the time. Apparently, Gade had asked his colleague to go home and write something “truly valuable”. Not wasting any time, Grieg finished the first movement within two weeks and completed the remaining three movements by May 1864. It was an ambitious project with which Grieg exposed himself to comparisons with his most potent predecessors and contemporaries. Both the charismatic key of C minor and the emotionally charged dynamism (“through night to light”), heading towards the finale, were linked to Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, whilst Schumann is present mostly in the harmonic language and in the lyrical passages. The symphonies by Gade and the revered Johann Peter Emilius Hartmann also left their mark on Grieg’s work, which may be less obvious to Central European ears but which related to the discussion about current “Nordic” music.

The quality of the young Grieg’s journeyman’s piece has been discussed more than the works of the “minor” masters. However, the original opening of the symphony should already surprise all those who are expecting mere imitation. With a powerful flourish of several accelerated chordal strikes, Grieg creates a dramatic atmosphere spilling over into the springy main theme, presented by a fanfare from the clarinets and violas as well as a vocal upsurge (both elements

will be processed at length later on). The two main elements of “rhythm” and “melody” thus enter into an exciting dialogue as early as the first theme, whilst the second theme fully relies on the *cantabile* sonority of the first violins’ G strings. Above all, the 20-year-old composer seeks to create as much variety in mood and character as possible; the movement ends with increasing acceleration and condensation of the main motifs.

Amongst the master’s fans this symphony has of course prompted a discussion as to whether an individual, “Griegian” style can be detected. Despite several references to the Larghetto from Robert Schumann’s First Symphony, the second movement in particular anticipates the well-known Grieg style: a vocal, slightly melancholy theme is continued and varied with distinctive harmonic devices and a peppering of chromaticisms; multiple layers of accompanying rhythms create a floating, iridescent atmosphere which is reinforced by the frothy instrumentation.

These fragile sounds are contrasted with the mazurka-like, stamping rhythms of the scherzo’s dancing swagger. This is reversed by the trio’s intimate mood, featuring flowing figures in the wind instruments. The movement with the greatest formal ambitions, however, is the finale, which appears, like a movement by Franz Schubert, out of thin air but then develops into a jubilant movement which surprisingly comes to a standstill in the middle of the development section. A new, chorale-like theme makes an entrance, beginning as if it were an apotheosis of the symphony but remaining without any impact on the course of the piece – a formal inconsequence in a significant closing movement for which Grieg might justifiably be reproached.

The destiny of this work is curious, as the composer withdrew it after several partial performances in Bergen and Copenhagen: his note “må aldrig opføres” (may never be performed) prevented generations of loyal archivists from releasing the work for performance. When the Russian conductor Vitali Katayev asked Bergen city library for a photocopy of the score for “research purposes” and, against the agreement with the Soviet Union, performed it in December 1980, Norway felt obliged to rehabilitate the long-unrecognised piece of national heritage by arranging a performance of it as well. Even if details of the youthful work are still being criticised nowadays, as his most substantial orchestral work, Grieg’s C minor Symphony represents a significant tessera in his career.

Summer in Søllerød

An old black and white photo from the collection of the Royal Library Copenhagen depicts a rural whitewashed inn with flat thatch, mirrored in the village pond. The tables and chairs in front of the house are still empty whilst a carriage is coming around the corner at some speed, apparently transporting the first guests to the still virginal idyll. During the summer of 1868, this inn in Søllerød, a popular seaside resort at Øresund, north of Copenhagen, was home to a lively trio of artists who, afterwards, would bring a certain amount of fame to the village. The Danish composer Emil Horneman and the Norwegian pianist Edmund Neupert regularly stopped by at the inn, and sometimes were joined by the 25-year-old Edvard Grieg, who spent a lot of his time in a remote garden house where he worked at his most ambitious project up to that point. A piano concerto was evolving during this unbearably hot summer at Søllerød – a large-scale work in three movements with which the young Norwegian dared another foray into “great form” four years after completing his symphony. And he probably would not have dreamt that only a few decades later this piece would be taken across Europe and even into the New World by the finest soloists.

As a pianist and conductor, the Norwegian from the provincial town of Bergen who had Scottish ancestors (his great-grandfather still spelled his name “Greig”) already enjoyed a certain prominence. Grieg’s father ran a business exporting lobster and dried fish whilst holding the respected position of British vice consul. His mother was a trained pianist and ensured that their home was filled with music. Bergen and its environs remained an important reference point for Grieg: he was raised on the country estate of Landås and later on would retreat to the sublime natural beauty of the Hardangerfjord. According to a contemporary bon mot, however, Norway in the mid-nineteenth century had only one conservatoire: the Leipzig one. Grieg therefore moved to Saxony in 1858 where he was to study, for three and a half years, piano and composition. His teachers included Moritz Hauptmann and Carl Reinecke.

After his return, Grieg oscillated between Bergen, Copenhagen and Kristiania (today’s Oslo), founded the first Norwegian music academy and, as conductor of the Philharmonic Society, reformed the city’s music life by offering innovative concert programmes featuring works from the Baroque period to his present era. On his way to becoming a “national composer” who wanted to disengage from the romantic mainstream, Grieg received defining impulses from his short-lived fellow student Richard Nordraak, as well as the violin virtuoso and ardent patriot Ole Bull, who introduced Grieg to Norwegian peasant folk music. This opened up a fresh new corpus of melodies and tonal systems which were to come to wonderful fruition in his piano concerto of 1868. During a time of Norwe-

gian dependence on Sweden (the union of 1815 had aligned the two states under Swedish supremacy), this was of course a political signal. The piano concerto of 1868 thus became a declaration of an independent Scandinavian musical tradition which in Central Europe was unjustly denigrated as “Norwegianisation”.

As Grieg lacked experience with the large-scale orchestral apparatus, he looked for models. References to Chopin can be found in the orchestral writing, but even more so to Robert Schumann’s Piano Concerto in the same key of A minor, which also inspired the opening flourish: following a timpani roll and a tutti downbeat, the piano descends in a cascade of full-fingered chords, leading into a march-like springy main melody which is not unlike the theme of the Schumann concerto. Grieg’s effective piano writing appears astonishingly mature, successfully combining orchestral sound extension, brilliant passagework and romantic sentiment. At the same time, Grieg ensures that the soloist does not need to wait during extended orchestral tuttis but that he is almost constantly present. Instead of great symphonic blocks, Grieg creates a lively dialogue which at times seems to be inspired by folk tradition. The lyrical second theme of the cellos plays a subordinate role in the first movement: in the development section, the dominant features are still the piano cascade from the beginning and the main theme which leads to an apotheosis in a grandiose cadenza à la Franz Liszt.

The slow movement shows how anxious Grieg was to construct a cyclical structure in his concerto – an idea which had been introduced to him by the “Leipzig School” of Schumann and Mendelssohn. A solemn, *religioso* tone in the muted strings creates a nocturnal atmosphere which the soloist continues in a Chopinesque manner. His seemingly improvisatory garlands veil the powerful piano gesture from the beginning of the concerto, which is gradually transformed into a lyrical entity by way of “motif metamorphosis”. The emotional peak of the movement features the adagio theme in a brilliant *fortissimo* from the piano; it then slowly drifts away in arpeggios and ecstatic trills.

After this gentle nocturnal piece, morning dawns with a vigorous dance drawing on the Norwegian Halling, a rhythmic acrobatic dance traditionally accompanied by fiddles. The theme and its derivations roll through the solo and orchestral parts; peace only comes with a simple flute melody whose repeat on the piano evokes once again the nocturnal mood of the second movement. But the spirits are soon chased away by the opening dance and a brief solo cadenza heralds the coda: an even more furious variant of the dance in triple time whose wildness in the end is arched over by the hymnic version of the lyrical second theme – an effect which sent Franz Liszt into rapture when he played through the concerto in his Roman palazzo. But the audience at the premiere in Copenhagen on 3 April 1869 was also taken with the new piece which was performed by its dedicatee, Edmund Neupert. “I celebrated a true and great triumph”, Neupert reported back the following day to the composer who had been otherwise engaged. “I was called back twice to the stage, and at the end, the orchestra played a big flourish for me.”

Peer Gynt and his influence

Most plays in the nineteenth century had incidental music written for them: it is striking that, in our perception today, most of this music appears to stand in peculiar contrast to the corresponding plays. Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, with its swift tempo, grotesque transformations and cynicism towards the lower classes is far more *outré* than Mendelssohn’s music. And Edvard Grieg’s music for Henrik Ibsen’s *Peer Gynt*, whose title character is misanthropic and egotistical, seems almost harmless – at least on first hearing, which has made numbers such as *Morning Mood* and *Solveig’s Song* very popular. On closer inspection, however, the numbers with a more complex structure reveal a modern streak which Grieg avoids in his other orchestral music.

Let us examine the **Prelude to Act I** of Ibsen’s verse drama, showing the peasant’s son Peer as loser and perky winner at the same time. Thanks to his indifference, he has spoiled his chances to marry the rich Ingrid, which would have restored his family’s finances. At the wedding celebrations, Solveig proves to be the only girl whom Peer really loves – nonetheless he abducts the bride, abandoning her after one night. In the Prelude (“At the Wedding”), Grieg presents us with festive wedding music which had become a fixture in Romantic operas. But after only half a minute, this music pauses and, with an abrupt change in mood, *Solveig’s Song* is heard, which Grieg would arrange again and again for concert performances (including, the last time, for his *Six Orchestral Songs*). Another surprise follows: the space widens acoustically; behind the scenes a solo viola starts playing (replacing the Norwegian Hardanger fiddle), initially intoning a Halling and then a quick Springar, anticipating the dance scene. Only then does the wedding music return, this time in a broader version. This makes for

a complex, intricately structured and musically highly attractive movement, already hinting at the main features of Peer's character – Norwegian rooting, blind recklessness and melancholy reflection.

The **Dance of the Mountain King's Daughter** from Act II, on the other hand, is one of the many erotic wooing dances performed by down-to-earth, magical or exotic women who seduce Peer. In this case it is the daughter of the demonic troll king, clad in green, who moves to a sturdy Norwegian dance, attractively orchestrated for piano, harp and xylophone. Grieg had planned this music as an “absolute parody” and wanted “the audience to perceive it as such”. Musically, he approached the rhythmically sharpened style of a Prokofiev or a Stravinsky.

In its audacity and spontaneous freshness, the music for Ibsen's drama was one of Grieg's happiest musical inspirations – perhaps exactly because he was pressed for time, writing for the performance at the Christiania Theatre in February 1876, not wishing to disappoint the world-famous poet. Grieg would draw on his *Peer Gynt* material for a long time, arranging two orchestral suites and recycling popular vocal numbers such as *Solveig's Song*. Two Solveig songs also open his cycle of **Six Orchestral Songs** which Grieg assembled from earlier songs during a stay in Copenhagen in 1894/95. The then 51-year-old composer was seriously indisposed due to illness at the time, forced, with a heavy heart, to cancel conducting engagements in Germany; he used his recovery period to write contributions to a popular genre of the day, the orchestral song.

Solveig's Song, with its wondrous shift from minor to major, essentially is a counterpart to Gretchen's spinning song, “Meine Ruh ist hin” [My peace is gone] from Part I of Goethe's *Faust*, even if in Grieg's case it is not the restless spinning wheel but Solveig's longing for the return of her unhappy love, Peer, which determines its character. Whilst Grieg kept the original instrumentation with four wind instruments, he drastically changed the sound of the last number of his incidental music when he incorporated it in the orchestral songs. Instead of a full orchestra plus choir it is now only harp and strings that accompany *Solveig's Lullaby* – a quiet, yet touching, triumph of constant love.

Most of the orchestral songs are dominated by an elegiac, autumnal atmosphere – including the Romantic evening song *From Monte Pincio*, setting a text by the Norwegian poet (who was later to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature) Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson. Not only did Grieg owe him several stage projects, but also his enthusiasm for the national cause. In his poetic view from the Pincian Hill, Bjørnson experiences the Roman goings-on as a contrast to Italy's erstwhile greatness which, at some point in the future, he believes will return. Accordingly, Grieg creates an attractive change of colour between the heroic tone of the evocation of antiquity and the bold dance music scurrying along in the manner of a waltz from a Delibes ballet at the end of the two verses.

As *From Monte Pincio*, the two following songs are also arrangements of earlier piano songs. *A Swan*, after a poem by Ibsen, appears like a heavy barcarolle depicting the silent swan that only begins singing at the point of death. Grieg had extracted the poem *Last Spring* from a collection by Aasmund Olavson Vinje. “Vinje was a peasant by birth”, Grieg later explained to his American biographer, Henry T Finck. “He attempted with his prose works to enlighten the Norwegian people: and these writings, together with his poems, gave him a great national importance.” In *Last Spring*, however, Vinje took up the ancient symbolism of blossoming nature and a retrospective view on a fulfilled life. Grieg set the slightly sentimental text with a rich string accompaniment, towards the end bordering on a Wagnerian soundscape.

Of a more recent date than the previous songs was the setting of John Paulsen's poem *Henrik Wergeland*, evoking the deeds, death and significance of the Norwegian activist and poet Henrik Arnold Wergeland (1808-1845). Wergeland was a political polemicist and sympathiser of Norwegian language reform. He died of lung disease at the age of thirty-seven and has been celebrated by following generations as a guarantor of Norwegian independence, which had not yet been achieved during his lifetime: “May the spirit of your deeds remain with us forever! Norway's guardian spirit, Henrik Wergeland!” – these are the closing lines which Grieg, following the death tolls of the preceding bars, comments with a triumphant outburst.

Inspiration in Hardanger

Although Edvard Grieg consistently fought the accusation of “Norwegianising” in his music, he – particularly during less creative periods – made the most of his position as a Norwegian national composer. His *Six Orchestral Songs* already reveal a solemn mood and an emotive idealisation of the patriotic Wergeland. However, the orchestral transcriptions of his *Lytic Pieces* for piano, published in ten volumes between 1867 and 1901, also demonstrate that he was mainly

interested in Nordic moods and sonic landscapes, whilst he left aside less nationally oriented numbers. *Evening in the mountains*, the opening piece of the **Lyric Pieces, Op. 68**, of 1899 is, in the orchestral version, an effective image of man's complete isolation within the grandeur of nature. The shepherd's melody on the oboe is echoed by the entire string section, spinning out the simple tune (which is faintly reminiscent of the cor anglais in Act III of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*) into an impassioned plaint. "It was like a vision. Even I was overwhelmed", the composer commented after a performance of the work which he had directed himself. However, for the lullaby, arranged for (partially muted) strings, he returns to the longing tone of Solveig from *Peer Gynt*.

Grieg had lived in Kristiania (today's Oslo) for a good ten years from 1866 until early 1877, founded the first Norwegian Music Academy and, as the conductor of the Philharmonic Society, enlivened the city's concert life by presenting innovative programmes stretching from Baroque repertoire to contemporary music. The violinist and glowing patriot Ole Bull, who introduced Grieg to Norwegian folk music, proved to be an invaluable source of musical inspiration: a completely unused stock of melodies and tonal systems opened up before the young composer, coming to fruition for the first time in his Piano Concerto of 1868. Perhaps it was due to problems with the audience in Kristiania as well as a need to be closer to the origins of these melodies which led Grieg and his wife Nina to travel to the West Norwegian countryside in 1877. In Hardanger, between fjords and glaciers, they found lodgings in the small town of Lofthus where Grieg composed his string quartet as well as piano and vocal works – including the only original orchestral song, the ballad for baritone, **Den Bergtekne** (The Mountain Thrall).

As with many works, grand designs had been made for the ballad; however, what remained from the planned large-scale choral piece was a short, but intensive, work, abruptly opening with a diminished chord and only then presenting the main theme in the horn. It is the motif of wandering aimlessly (Andante) which leads the narrator through dark woods and into the arms of elf-women (Allegro agitato). Fulfilment and good fortune, as illustrated by Grieg in the major-key middle section (Poco mosso), however, do not form part of the wanderer's journey: his life remains without direction or love. And there seems to be an indication that the composer, who suffered from a difficult relationship with Nina, portrayed himself in this piece – with seemingly resigned music, dominated by the sound of the much-divided strings.

Grieg's persuasion of not having found true love in his life was compounded by permanent creative crises. "I have lost the strength for great forms", he lamented, writing to a friend from the idyll of Lofthus. And whenever his Leipzig publisher Max Abraham called for a "work of significant form and content", a creative block was the inevitable consequence. At least the peace of Lofthus was sufficiently relaxing and inspiring for Grieg to be able to complete his **Norwegian Dances, Op. 35**, for piano for four hands in the summer of 1881. In contrast to Johannes Brahms or Antonín Dvořák, who had newly invented their Hungarian and Slavonic Dances in the spirit of these respective dance types, Grieg drew on the collection of *Older and Newer Norwegian Mountain Melodies*, published from 1853 by the organist Ludvig Mathias Lindeman. This time, Grieg left the instrumentation to others, the most popular version today being that of the Czech conductor and violist Hans Sitt, commissioned by the Leipzig publisher – Grieg accepted it reluctantly.

The snappy melody of the first dance is called *Sinclair's March* in Lindeman's collection which may be a wink towards Grieg's Scottish heritage (the original spelling of his family name was "Greig"). The march theme is used to great effect in the manner of symphonic scherzos, and even spun out with variations in the *cantabile* central section. The remaining three dances correspond to the Halling, a solo dance in moderate tempo performed by men. The second dance saunters along without haste and with delicate phrasing – not without an outburst in the middle section, this time a rapid Allegro. Another march with many surprising accents also characterises the third dance; the theme is varied once again in the elegiacally-hued Tranquillo section. The final dance surely has the most intriguing structure: the unusual introduction, appearing "slow" despite the swift tempo, presents a theme in the bass register which later returns in the calm central section; the bold call of the horn and oboe already hints at the Halling theme of the fast main section. After a repeat of the Presto section, Grieg lays on a coda which brings the entire cycle to a brilliant close.

“The flavour of this music is in my blood.” – Eivind Aadland, Grieg and Norwegian Folk Music

Eivind Aadland grew up in Bergen in the vicinity of Grieg’s villa, Troidhaugen, attending chamber music concerts on a regular basis during his youth. Later, as a violinist, he gave many concerts himself at the villa, accompanied by pianists playing Grieg’s grand piano. The concerts at Troidhaugen were mainly dedicated to Grieg’s works, which meant that Eivind Aadland came into intensive contact with Grieg’s music from an early age, virtually being raised on it.

Eivind Aadland comes from a family where Norwegian folk music holds a long tradition. His grandfather was an accomplished player of the Hardanger fiddle, and fiddle music was omnipresent in the family home, be it through family members playing it, or through renditions on the radio. No wedding, family reunion or indeed any possible opportunity passed without several “slaatter” (fiddle tunes) being played. Although Eivind Aadland does not play the fiddle himself, these sonic experiences of Norwegian folk music have shaped him greatly: ideal prerequisites for re-exploring Grieg’s symphonic orchestral works against the background of this tradition!

In this complete recording of the symphonic works for audite, Eivind Aadland attaches especial importance to highlighting the folkloristic elements in Grieg’s music. In doing so, he produces a particular lightness within the orchestral sound, clearly setting him apart from the German romantic sound ideals, as for instance with Brahms. By way of illustration, a few examples from the *Symphonic Dances*:

In contrast to Dvořák’s *Slavonic Dances*, for instance, Grieg’s *Symphonic Dances* are based on existing, original folk songs (collected and published by Ludvig Lindeman in *Ældre og nyere norske Fjeldmelodier*).

The first dance is a “halling”, a fast dance in 2/4 or 6/8. In the first bars Grieg immediately inserts an open fifth, G-D, corresponding to the open strings of the violin or the Hardanger fiddle. Aadland uses the *tenuto / marcato* character of the opening to evoke the sound and character of a fiddle; he also presents this accompanying tune as an equal to the melody, thus further emphasising the fiddle character.

In the middle section of the second dance (after 1’40) Aadland also focuses on the folk music elements: the melody which begins with a clarinet solo is played with much emphasis on the beginning of the notes, and great contrast between the short, accentuated and the long notes of the theme.

The third dance is a “springdans”, or “springar”. The characteristic accentuation of the first and second beats in the bar gives this dance its typical “folk swing”. An almost perfect example of this is the *forte* passage at 1’18.

Kulokk and *Stabbelaaten* from the second part of Op. 63 are originally folk tunes. Aadland has the opening of *Stabbelaaten* played entirely without vibrato in order to imitate the sound of a fiddle player tuning his instrument. This is followed by a slightly rustic *Allegro* where a solo fiddle takes on the tutti strings, in the manner of a *Spelemannslag* – a group of fiddlers playing together.

Kulokk (“Cow-Call”) precedes *Stabbelaaten* and creates the type of rural atmosphere which Aadland experienced as a child when he stayed at his grandparents’ farm: in order to feed and milk the cows who were on the meadow, his grandmother called them, each evening, with a sung “lokk” akin to *Kulokk*.

Norsk (“Norwegian”) from Op. 53 also demonstrates the impact of folk music. The accentuated *tenuto* character of the opening is typical of folk fiddle playing; Aadland also has this played without vibrato.

Even the *Holberg Suite* reveals the Norwegian character: though the movements are based on a French suite, the music is suffused with Norwegian colours which Aadlands emphasises, as for instance in the accentuated off-beats of the *Musette*, which are drawn from folk music.

There are many more examples of the influence of Norwegian folk music in these recordings. Aadland makes use of all of them in order to form what he believes to be Grieg’s favoured orchestral sound.

Grieg’s connections with Germany stretch from his studies in Leipzig to his numerous concert performances in that country. Added to that is the extraordinary circulation of his works in Germany – by the First World War, *Peer Gynt*, for instance, had been performed over 5000 times (!) in Germany. This recording with the WDR Sinfonieorchester therefore also represents a German-Norwegian synthesis on several levels which had already been in existence during Grieg’s lifetime.

CAMILLA TILLING

A graduate of both the University of Gothenburg and London's Royal College of Music, Camilla Tilling made an early debut at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden as Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), a role she went on to sing at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre, La Monnaie and the Munich Festival. An ongoing relationship with the Royal Opera House has seen her return as Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Dorinda (*Orlando*), Oscar (*Un ballo in maschera*), Arminda (*La finta giardiniera*), Gretel (*Hansel und Gretel*) and most recently as Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*). At The Metropolitan Opera she has appeared as both Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) and Nannetta (*Falstaff*). As Susanna she has performed at the San Francisco Opera, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Bayerische Staatsoper, and Opéra National de Paris. With the vocal flexibility to embrace a diverse repertoire, Camilla Tilling has enjoyed success as the Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*) at The Glyndebourne Festival, as l'Ange (*Saint François d'Assise*) at De Nederlandse Opera, as Mélisande (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) at Teatro Real Madrid and in her house debut at Sächsische Staatsoper Dresden, as Euridice (*Orfeo ed Euridice*) at Salzburg Mozartwoche, and as Donna Clara (*Der Zwerg*) at Bayerische Staatsoper. Most recently Camilla returned to Opéra national de Paris as Pamina and sang her first Contessa (*Le nozze di Figaro*) at Drottningholms Slottsteater.

A highly regarded concert performer, Camilla Tilling is a regular guest of the Berliner Philharmoniker, Orchestre de Paris, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, NDR Sinfonieorchester and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Recent highlights include Berg's *Sieben frühe Lieder* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Lionel Bringuier, Strauss' *Vier letzte Lieder* at the Salzburg Festival with the Philharmonia Orchestra under Christoph von Dohnányi, Mahler's Symphony No.4 at the BBC Proms with the London Symphony Orchestra and Bernard Haitink, with the Orchestre National de France under Robin Ticciati and with the Vienna Symphony under Philippe Jordan. Recent performances with the Berliner Philharmoniker include Beethoven's Symphony No.9 at Berlin's Waldbühne under Sir Simon Rattle, *La resurrezione* under Emmanuelle Haïm, and Peter Sellars' highly-acclaimed production of St. Matthew Passion in Lucerne, London and New York.



TOM ERIK LIE

Tom Erik Lie was born in Oslo and studied singing from 1986 to 1991 at the Conservatory and at the State Opera Academy in Oslo. In 1991 his first engagement led him to Düsseldorf. From 1993 to 1998 Tom Erik Lie was engaged in Gelsenkirchen. In 1995 he received the Ingrid Bjoner Scholarship for young Singers. Guest engagements followed in Hannover, Essen, Nürnberg, Bonn, Leipzig and Dresden. From 1998 to 2001 Tom Erik Lie was a member of the ensemble at the opera in Leipzig. Here he sang Frère Léon in the German première of Messiaens *Saint François d'Assise*, Guglielmo, Papageno, Siegfried in Schumann's *Genoveva* and Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*, a part which he also sang at the Royal Opera Copenhagen. As Don Giovanni and Robert Storch (in *Intermezzo* by R. Strauss) he had great success at Garsington Opera Festival. From 2001 to 2004 he was engaged at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, where he sang Papageno, Wolfram, Sharpless, Albert, Schaunard and Frère Léon. At the Komische Oper Berlin he had his debut in 2003 as Edwin in *Die Csárdásfürstin*. Since 2004 he is a member of the ensemble there, and sings Marcello (*La Bohème*), Count Almaviva (*The marriage of Figaro*), the title parts in *Eugene Onegin* and *Don Giovanni*, Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*), Papageno (*The Magic Flute*), Gabriel von Eisenstein (*Die Fledermaus*), Prince Jeletzky (*Pique Dame*), Beckmesser (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) and Horatio in Christian Jost' *Hamlet* (world premiere). In 2010 Tom Erik Lie sang the part of Phileas Fogg in Oslo in the premiere of *In 80 Days around the World* by Gisle Kverndokk.

Tom Erik Lie has sung numerous concerts in Europe, Asia and the USA with conductors like Christian Thielemann, Kirill Petrenko, Sir André Previn, Michael Jurowsky, Marcello Viotti, Paolo Carignani, Friedeman Layer, Mark Albrecht, Jiri Kout and Peter Schneider.



HERBERT SCHUCH

Herbert Schuch is recognized as one of the most interesting musicians of his generation by virtue of his sophisticated programs and recordings. He attracted international attention when he won three important piano competitions – the Casagrande competition, the London International Piano Competition, and the International Beethoven Piano Competition in Vienna – within a single year. In 2013 he received the ECHO Klassik for his recording of concertos (Viktor Ullmann, Ludwig van Beethoven) together with the WDR Sinfonieorchester. In 2012 Herbert Schuch was already awarded with an ECHO Klassik in the category “Chamber Music Recording of the Year”.

Herbert Schuch was born in Temesvar (Romania) in 1979. After early piano lessons in his home town, he emigrated with his family in 1988 to Germany, where he since lives. He continued his musical studies with Kurt Hantsch and then with Prof. Karl-Heinz Kämmerling at the Mozarteum in Salzburg. In the recent past Herbert Schuch has been particularly influenced by his encounters and work with Alfred Brendel.

Herbert Schuch has worked with orchestras such as the London Philharmonic Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra, Camerata Salzburg, Residentie Orkest Den Haag, Bamberger Symphoniker, Dresden Philharmonie, and the radio symphony orchestras of hr, MDR, WDR, NDR Hannover, and DR (Danmarks Radio). He is a regular guest at festivals such as Kissinger Sommer, Rheingau Musik Festival, Klavier-Festival Ruhr, and Salzburger Festspiele. He collaborates with conductors Pierre Boulez, Douglas Boyd, Eivind Gullberg Jensen, Jakub Hrůša, Jun Märkl, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Jonathan Nott and Michael Sanderling.

Alongside his concert work, Herbert Schuch has been active for some time in the “Rhapsody in School” organization founded by Lars Vogt, which is committed to bringing classical music into schools.





The **WDR Symphony Orchestra** was formed in 1947 as part of the then North West German Radio (NWDR) and nowadays belongs to the West German Radio (WDR). Principal conductors were Christoph von Dohnányi, Zdenek Macal, Hiroshi Wakasugi, Gary Bertini, Hans Vonk and Semyon Bychkov. Celebrated guest conductors such as Fritz Busch, Erich Kleiber, Otto Klemperer, Karl Böhm, Herbert von Karajan, Günter Wand, Sir Georg Solti, Sir André Previn, Lorin Maazel, Claudio Abbado and Zubin Mehta have performed with the orchestra. The WDR Symphony Orchestra tours regularly in all European countries, in North and South America and in Asia. Since the season 2010/2011 Jukka-Pekka Saraste from Finland is the Chief Conductor of the orchestra.

EIVIND AADLAND

Eivind Aadland has been Chief Conductor and Artistic Leader of the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra from 2003 to 2010. In addition, he has worked with many other Scandinavian orchestras, including the Oslo and Bergen Philharmonics, the Stavanger Symphony, the Finnish and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestras and the Swedish Chamber Orchestra. He is also a frequent visitor to other European orchestras such as the WDR Cologne, SWR Stuttgart and the RSO Berlin; he has appeared with the Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse, Royal Flemish Philharmonic, the Lausanne and Scottish Chamber Orchestras and the Symphony Orchestras of Melbourne, Tasmania and Iceland. Concert tours led Eivind Aadland to China, Korea and Australia.

His recording output includes a diverse range of repertoire putting a special focus on Norwegian composers.

Previously a violinist having studied with Yehudi Menuhin, Eivind Aadland was concertmaster of the Bergen Philharmonic from 1981 to 1989 and Music Director of the European Union Chamber Orchestra from 1987 to 1997. Then he devoted himself to conducting completely and studied with Jorma Panula.



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