

IAMIC Concert 2006

with

Gageego!

Göteborg Concert Hall, June 20, 19.00

Conductor: Gunno Palmquist

VLEGGGAAR, Giel (The Netherlands - Gaudeamus)

Day Before Dusk (1999-2000)

fl, cl, vl, vlc, perc, pf

VERBEY, Theo (The Netherlands - Donemus)

Perplex (2004)

fl, cl, vl, vlc, vibra, pf

BRØDSGAARD, Anders (Denmark)

Drabant (Opus Es #5) (2002)

perc, fag

NESS, Jon Øivind (Norway)

Iffy daffadowndilly (2004)

piano trio

INTERVAL

HARRIS, Ross (New Zealand)

At the Edge of Silence (2003)

fl, cl, vl, vlc, pf

BŁOŃSKA, Alina (Poland)

Lutosławiana (2000)

fl, cl, vl, vlc, perc, pf

SVEINSSON, Atli Heimir (Iceland)

Fluff and Drama (2004)

fl, cl, 2perc, vl, vlc, pf

Gageego!

Anders Jonhäll, flute
Ragnar Arnberg, clarinet
Anette Olsson Varela, bassoon
Per Sjögren & Jonas Larsson, percussion
Mårten Landström, piano
Eva Lindal, violin
Johan Stern, cello

Gunno Palmquist, conductor

Gageego! established in 1995 and explores the realm of new music, wishing to make it accessible to a wider public. The ensemble began as a group of musician friends with the desire to play exceptional music in an exceptional way. The group plays modern classics, newly composed repertoire and specially commissioned works. They are driven by the desire for new challenges, both artistically and technically. Success and the positive audience response spurs the group to continue exploring new musical territory.

The group works regularly with Swedish and international artists such as Peter Eötvös, Heinz Karl Gruber and Pierre-André Valade.

In addition to concert performances in Sweden, the group has toured Russia, Denmark, and Austria where they were guest artists at the Vienna concert for the Lange Nacht der Neue Klänge. The Austrian press was enthusiastic.

"The ensemble Gageego! captivated the audience with precision and virtuosity" thought Der Standard.

Wiener Zeitung wrote *"The ensemble Gageego! made the audience forget its tiredness. The ensemble playing with emphasized precision and a beautiful sound. A Swedish victory"*.

www.gageego.nu

Composer biographies and programme notes in order as they appear:

GIEL VLEGGGAAR (1974)

Life: Giel Vleggaar's music describes life: everyday habits, sounds from the global village, the stresses of urban European reality with its humour and pathos alike. His medium: contemporary classical music.

On the Road: Born in 1974 in Amsterdam, he has stayed rooted, graduating in composition (with Theo Verbey and Daan Manneke) from the Conservatory of Amsterdam in 2001. And yet, he has been on the road: fascination and flirtation with jazz and pop music (leading to jazz arranging and composition studies with Jurre Haanstra at the Conservatory of Hilversum), a trip to visit the Wolof tribe in the Gambia in 1998, and studies in Karnatic music (with Rafael Reina). His musical influences and tastes remain wide-ranging, providing the inspiration for musical creations of great versatility.

Versatility: It is indeed this versatility that catches the audience's attention: he is as comfortable writing for orchestra, receiving the NOG Incentive Prize in the Young Composers Project from the Netherlands Ballet Orchestra for his piece *Fast Lane Woodpecker* in 2002, as for unusual combinations such as the duo Harry Sparnaay/Annelie de Man (bass clarinet/harpsichord) in *Counting Stars with Confidence*. Nor is Giel Vleggaar a stranger to dance or theater: the multi-media event *Ozo zwaar Ozo Licht* in the Netherlands' Filmmuseum (1994), the musictheater production *Perpetuum Mobile* by Dutch theatergroup Orkater (1996), and the dance piece *DNCS* (1999) all featured his music. Stylistically, his pieces also exhibit great variation: *Appalachia* (composed for the Nieuw Ensemble) winks a musical eye at bluegrass while *Come Here Often?* pits two percussionists against a tape of the twenty-something dating scene. And while humour often sparkles through the texture, darker moods and issues also resound, such as *In Limbo* or *Fast Lane Woodpecker*.

Outlook: "You can bring every piece in music history back to a melodic development. So why not work in such a way that you sketch that essence first and then add the other elements? I find it a very inspiring way to work and I've really stepped back from thinking in predetermined constructions and calculated forms. " Giel Vleggaar's modus operandi is the basis for a style which celebrates lyricism while inviting the unexpected. Free association from a musical perspective works to create an unashamed musical-magico-realism in which Vleggaar can pull on the heart strings, tip his hat to the greats of the Western musical tradition, and wink at the audience in one go. His music enjoys the elusive position of being both absolutely suitable for the serious contemporary classical concert stage and yet also accessible to a wide audience. Vleggaar does not belong to any school or movement: he has developed his style using his own tastes and experiences as guides: from a childhood passion for funk, studies in jazz arranging and composition, experiences writing for theatre and dance to a taste of world rhythms from Africa and India and deep admiration for the great orchestrators of the last

century. Just as he allows himself to freely associate, he also believes in being freely inspired by all the sounds and senses of today's world.

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About *Day Before Dusk* (1999/2000):

Day Before Dusk is a study in contrast. The form of the piece consists of a series of alternate slow and fast sections. The fast sections are initially very active, then they gradually thin out and eventually come to terms with the slow ones. Each time a given section reoccurs it is shorter than before and developed within its own boundaries. The form follows a strict set of proportions consisting of the number series 7:5:6:4:5:3:4. These numbers are also used on a smaller scale to proportion each of the fast sections. The material in *Day Before Dusk* is very much self-contained and gives the effect of looking at the same object from a variety of angles. The piece evokes for me an image of a setting sun over a bustling city which is gradually calming down.

Giel Vleggaar

THEO VERBEY (1959)

Born on July 5, 1959 in Delft. He studied music theory 1978-1984, composition 1982-1985 at the Royal Conservatory of Music in The Hague with Peter Schat and Jan van Vlijmen and digital recording & mixing at the College of Multimedia in Amsterdam 1998. Since 1984 he teaches at the Royal Conservatory of Music in The Hague and since 1995 he teaches composition and instrumentation at the Sweelinck Conservatory of Music in Amsterdam. He has been jury member in international composition contests and visiting lecturer at the Royal College of Music in London. In 2001 he was composer in residence at the Europäisches Musikfest Münsterland.

Theo Verbey's compositions have been performed by almost any Dutch orchestra and by numerous ensembles abroad. His music has been presented at festivals such as Donaueschinger Musiktage, Tanglewood New Music Festival, Ultima Festival Oslo, Music Taipei and Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival. Upon completing his studies in 1985, Theo Verbey received the Prize for Composition. In 1987 he was awarded the *Aanmoedigingsprijs* of the Amsterdam Arts Fund for *Aura*.

About *Perplex* (2004):

The subject of *Perplex* (perpléxus = perplexed, confused) is the confrontation of several musical textures. The unison opening is repeated three times in the course of the piece; as an ending of the first and the second part and as a start of the fourth part. Aside from this opening, other musical subjects vary with one another. The subjects contrasts strongly and are hardly connected. The piece has no transitional stages and a suggesting character. Motifs and phrases are revealed but not developed further in a romantic way. The four components of the piece are in

the proportion of themselves in time as 5:7:4:8. These number proportions stipulate at lower levels the mutual length in relation to the individual motifs and phrases. This manner of composing is based on the planned rhythmic structure analogous to the isometrics of the Ars nova analogous (14th century) with composers like Guillaume de Machaut and Landini.

The foundation of the piece is formed by a succession of four chords, which remains unchanged and is invariably repeated. This too, is a process with a long history. These chords have a strongly tonal identity, but cannot be easily placed in a key because the relationship of the chords is unclear. It is only at the end of the piece that freedom is added to this technique. Through the use of three instrumental duos: flute/clarinet, violin/violoncello, and vibraphone/piano the piece has a truly own sound with strong percussive character. Vibraphone and piano have a function similar to the continuo section (i.e. the combination of keyboard instrument with a bass instrument) from the Baroque.

ANDERS BRØDSGAARD (1955) Denmark

Anders Brødsgaard studied piano from 1974 at the Funen Academy of Music with Rosalyn Bevan as teacher. From 1979 he studied contemporary piano music with Elisabeth Klein in Copenhagen and piano at the Royal Danish Academy of Music with Anker Blyme. He studied composition at the Jutland Academy of Music with Karl Aage Rasmussen, Per Nørgård and Hans Abrahamsen, and music theory with Orla Vinther. "Ferienkurse" in Darmstadt 1978 and 1982 and composition courses with Sven-David Sandström and Edison Denissov. Brødsgaard began writing rigorously structured pieces, by the serial composers of the 50s (above all Karlheinz Stockhausen) with the wind quintet *Oram* as an extreme example. From *Poltergeist* (1989) a more natural and spontaneous compositional style breaks out. In the more recent pieces he has been working with more fundamental musical phenomena like tonality and pulse and he is still inspired by the post-Pythagorean idea of a musical continuum between the musical parameters. His music has been performed at festivals in the Nordic countries as well as in Germany, Poland and Japan.

About *Drabant* (*Opus Es* #5) (2002):

The piece is part of a cycle of five compositions that I wrote when I was composer in residence by the Esbjerg Ensemble. The joint title is *Opus Es*. The combination of the five compositions is optional, and the complement of the players varies from a full ensemble of 12 instruments to a duo in the small *Drabant* for bassoon and percussion. These two instruments are chosen to ensure the existence of at least one work in the world using specific instrumentation. Like in other compositions of *Opus Es* rhythm is in the foreground, though with a more elastic, "rubber-like" feeling of pulse than in the other, more strictly pulsating pieces.

Anders Brødsgaard

JON ØIVIND NESS (1968)

Jon Øivind Ness was born in Bærum, and grew up in Inderøy in North-Trøndelag. From 1987 to 1989 he studied guitar under Jan Danielsen at the Royal Norwegian Academy of Music. He has since studied composition under Ragnar Söderlind, Olav Anton Thommessen and Lasse Thoresen.

Ness describes his music as follows:

"I have over a period of time worked with compacted sound-imagery of advanced complexity, and have in pieces such as "Schatten", "Dandy Garbage", a piano trio and the orchestral piece "Zap Francescos Phoney Pony", attempted to arrive at solutions where the global organisation of totalities do not impede the strong individual emergence of more localized occurrences. Whereas the former pieces were to a large degree based upon frenetic dramatism, the piano trio and "Zap Francescos Phoney Pony" expose an intuitive gesture coupled to a form of process-orientated thinking. In the last piece three processes run simultaneously, organizing time within a comprehensive idea. In the formation of individual parts, new processes running contrary to the original processes are included. Or rather, the localized processes perform two contrary actions simultaneously. Again, they do something entirely different.

My intention is to combine structurally conflicting elements, not in a polystylistic collage, but as facets within a tonal language. In my work with multi-applications, I have been compelled to develop a polytonality coupled to a timbral consciousness making possible the crystallization of individual elements out of tonal complexities."

ROSS HARRIS (1945) New Zealand

New Zealand composer Ross Harris began his musical studies at the University of Canterbury before moving to Wellington in 1970, where he simultaneously joined the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra as a french horn player and enrolled in a Master of Music degree at Victoria University. He was appointed a lecturer in music at Victoria University in 1971 and has recently retired from his position as Associate Professor in Composition there.

In 1978 he spent three months in Stockholm on a Swedish Institute scholarship, working in EMS Stockholm, the main Swedish centre for sonic artists and composers of electroacoustic music, and in 1982 he became a founding member of the live electronic music ensemble Free Radicals. The première of his opera *Waituhi* led to Harris being awarded the Queen's Service Medal for Public Service in 1985. He has also received the 1990 Citation for Services to New Zealand Music by the Composers Association of New Zealand. He has won the SOUNZ

Contemporary Award twice; in 2000 for his chamber work *To the Memory of I.S. Tetzka* and again in 2005 for *Labyrinth for Tuba and Orchestra*.

Harris' works include many piano pieces, songs, chamber music, operas, orchestral works, and jazz. The sonic possibilities of electroacoustic music had a strong influence on his early development as a composer, dominating his compositions during the 1970s. He has also used alternative tunings based on the harmonic series in his work, and been stimulated by the sounds of the natural environment. More recently, he has worked with various structured musical systems and developed a linear, goal-oriented style of writing, though intuition is still his primary motivator. In 2006 his works *As Though There Were No God* for orchestra, and *Music for Jonny* for string orchestra, were performed by the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra conducted by James MacMillan as part of the New Zealand International Arts Festival.

Biography written by Jane Dawson and used with the kind permission of Chamber Music New Zealand.

About *At the Edge of Silence* (2003):

Commissioned by Chamber Music New Zealand for performance by stroma. As the title suggests, the work hovers on the edge of audibility but it is also about memory – memories half forgotten – distorted over time. Part of the expression of this 'distortion' is invoked by the substantial use of quarter-tone inflections of melody and harmony.

At the Edge of Silence is in a single movement which is symmetrical around a musical quotation which drifts into the centre of the piece. Before and after this quotation the music unfolds around solo lines for each of the wind and string instruments in turn. The piano supplies echoes and resonances of the melodies and harmonies and also acts as a foil to the micro-tuning of the other instruments. The work was inspired by the virtuosity of the ensemble stroma.

At the Edge of Silence was a finalist for the SOUNZ Contemporary Award in 2004.

ALINA BŁOŃSKA (1974) Poland

Born in Cieszyn, Poland. Cello class in Wrocław. Studied composition with Grażyna Pstrokońska-Nawratil at the Music Academy in Wrocław. Her compositions have been performed during numerous festivals in Poland and abroad, such as the "Warsaw Autumn", Encuentro de Composición in Madrid, Festival "Joven de Música Clásica" in Segovia, Convención Internacional de Percusión in Palma de Mallorca and Foro Internacional de Música Nueva "Manuel Enriquez" in Mexico. Alina Błńska has frequently been commissioned to write music for ensembles in Poland and abroad. Currently she is resident in Spain.

About *Lutosławiana* (2000):

Lutosławiana was inspired by the music of Witold Lutosławski, a composer for whom I have deep respect. Although some elements from his musical language appear in this work, such as the element of change (the aleatory technique) or the

specific treatment of the piano, it was not my intention to imitate Lutosławski's style, but rather – to create a point of departure for my own music.

Alina Błońska – from the 2001 "Warsaw Autumn" programme book

ATLI HEIMIR SVEINSSON (1938)

Atli Heimir Sveinsson is one of the most prominent Icelandic postwar composers with a varied list of works to his credit, including operas, ballet and major orchestral works, widely performed. Mr. Sveinsson studied piano with Rögnvaldur Sigurjónsson at the Reykjavík College of Music, and composition, conducting and piano at the State Academy in Cologne, with teachers including Gunter Raphael, Rodolf Petzold and Bernd Alois Zimmermann. He studied with Karlheinz Stockhausen, and in the Netherlands he studied electronic music with Gottfried Michael Koenig. Atli Heimir Sveinsson's catalogue includes nine solo concertos, numerous orchestral, chamber and solo works, an orchestral song cycle to Steinn Steinarr's poem Time and Water; and the operas The Silk Drum, Vikivaki, Moonlight Island, and Hertervig, an opera written to a libretto by the Norwegian poet Paal-Helge Haugen. A new opera is to be premiered in December 2000. In addition he has composed religious songs and psalms, and music for the theatre, of which many songs have gained enormous popularity, enjoyed by young and old. Atli Heimir Sveinsson was president of the Society of Icelandic Composers in 1972-1983. In 1976 he received the Nordic Council Music Prize for his Concerto for Flute and Orchestra.

About *Fluff and Drama* (2004):

Composed little by little over a period of several years. There was no planning. When I occasionally added something new, I had forgotten what had been previously written. This was an improvisation without a past, impromptu in the real sense of the word. The quality of the music varied. I think there is some "good" music and some "bad". Some serious things and some unserious. I tried to avoid a style, what Adorno might have called frequent kind of similar consumption. Most other composers work differently.

Atli Heimir Sveinsson