

Come to the Edge!

Cecilie Ore



Vocal Music

Cecilie Ore

1 Come to the Edge! 19:31

Ensemble 96

Nina T. Karlsen, conductor

2 Who do you think you are? 07:11

Eir Inderhaug, soprano

3-5 The Vatican Trilogy

Dead Pope on Trial! 22:10

The Pregnant Pope! 12:04

The Fig Leaf Campaign! 06:10

Nordic Voices

Texts by Bibbi Moslet and Cecilie Ore

Cecilie Ore: Come to the Edge!

by Geir Johnson

When listening to Cecilie Ore's vocal music from recent years and comparing it with her works from the period around 1990 which saw her public breakthrough, it may seem as though she has gone through a dramatic change in regard to aesthetics. While the works for various string groupings on her first CD – *Codex Temporis* – were characterised by a furious intensity involving almost insurmountable technical challenges for the musicians, today's vocal music appears considerably less complicated both technically and in expression. Cecilie Ore's

instrumental music has been regarded by many as “unplayable” – or at the very least as hugely demanding which perhaps led to fewer recordings, but also to greater international notice than Norwegian composers have been used to in previous decades.

Cecilie Ore was preoccupied with the voice in several earlier works – her Op.1 *Chanson de Bilitis* for soprano and chamber ensemble is already an illustration of this – a brilliant impressionistic work that in no way can be said to be representative of the composer she

developed into. However, one need not go further than the solo piece *Calliope* from 1986 to find elements that are also recognisable in the later instrumental works. Here it is possible to find an analytical understanding of the text, leading to a clarity of the inner meaning. But this piece for solo soprano, based on a text by Gertrude Stein, remained relatively singular in her production since she towards the end of the 1980s, became increasingly more occupied with abstracting music from meaning; music should in principle be a free-standing architectural structure living by its own impact.

In this, of course, she was not alone – in many ways this has been an enduring principle in all modernism after the war and only a few composers can be said to have opposed it. Still, the unique thing about Cecilie Ore's development is the extent to which she works through this and develops a style and a form of expression that unites technical knowledge with a return to keeping a linguistic sense at the core. Social criticism has an ever stronger place in her production. The fury, which at the beginning was reflected through a high intensity in the tonal language and demands for technical perfection turned to an opposition in general to certain traits in contemporary political life. Focus on human rights both in an historic and a current context became discernable.

Schwirren from 2003, composed for the vocal ensemble Nordic Voices (released on Aurora ACD5055), is the first work to develop further the transformation of instrumental music into the vocal medium. The work is an interpretation of Robert Musil's "Das Fliegenpapier" which describes how a flypaper's viscous material traps, holds fast and in the last instance takes the life of its victims: the flies. The composer comments drily, "The text is no less than shocking since Musil attributes human characteristics to the flies." *Schwirren* represented a departure from the abstract and a movement towards a new means of expression where free dissonances and layers of tonality gain a fresh significance. *Schwirren* definitely has language as a starting point, but the emphasis as regards content is still ambiguous.

Ore's turn to social criticism has little by little manifested itself in many different theatrical forms: the music-drama *A. – ein skuggeopera* (*A. – a shadow opera*) – from 2001 (released on Aurora ACD5034), was both a zero point and a turning point. The work is a theatrical installation for electronics, computer graphics, voices and dance. There is an inner monologue, in which Agamemnon wanders through the history of war. In 2008 The Norwegian Opera premiered *Dead Beat Escapement* – an opera about the meaninglessness of the death penalty, as it is practised in American prisons. In 2013-15

came the stage work *Adam & Eve – a Divine Comedy*, an opera that focuses on violence against women seen in a religious perspective.

A consequence of this socio-political involvement has been that in recent years, she has concentrated on writing for the human voice, often in the form of works for a choir, such as the BBC Singers and Ensemble 96, singers like Eir Inderhaug and Tora Augestad, and vocal ensembles such as Nordic Voices. This turn-around, with a strong emphasis on the text and language, is to some degree connected to a co-operation she began with the dramaturge and author Bibbi Moslet around 2005. Their intellects and ways of thinking found an echo in one another and for many years they have developed synopses, libretti and material to most of Cecilie Ore's more recent works. Through this association, Cecilie Ore's musical development has taken a new direction with an increased interest for social and ideological criticism.

With *Come to the Edge!* from 2013, originally written for the BBC Singers, she created a choral work which takes its stance in one of the most discussed court cases of the time. The work is dedicated to the Russian opposition punk group Pussy Riot, whose members in 2012 were sentenced to two years of imprisonment for "hooliganism inspired by hatred of religion", as the verdict

stated. In this work allegations from the court case are juxtaposed with historical quotations about the meaning of freedom of speech. At the same time it both comments and accuses by speaking directly to the audience. In other words, there is a willed aspect of *Verfremdungstechnik* (alienation technique) as we know it from the Brechtian theatre.

Who do you think you are? from 2014 is a key work in this theatrical development. While the basis for *Calliope* from 1986 was a text by Gertrude Stein, in which the American author in her monologue searches for her identification as an artist, Cecilie Ore now sees women's problems in a wider perspective. She maintains that most women still confront a far more brutal reality than finding an artistic self. If they raise their voices in a public space, they challenge the limits of freedom of speech. For many women this has involved threats of mutilation, rape and death. The soloist in the work is thus a spokeswoman for freedom of speech for all who attempt to raise their voices in the public debate.

"I am talking to myself and strangers" the female voice says in *Calliope* where the self is searching for her own identity. Through Cecilie Ore's music it finds it in a virtuoso, almost polyphonic, movement where speech, singing and whispering are integrated into an organic whole. In *Who do you think you are?* the

format is the same, but the text here is a montage on three different levels, set into a context of social criticism – performed as a speech to parliament in connection with the 200th anniversary of the Norwegian Constitution. The Parliament’s exuberant celebrations were thrown into relief by this textual montage, and the work ends with the polemic question, “What are we celebrating?” This piece, with the ironic subtitle “a political stand-up romance” is certainly the only solo vocal work ever performed in the Norwegian Parliament. This took place a year after the constitution’s anniversary – and through it a creative artist, for a short time, had access to the country’s foremost platform.

Of course there is a long, if neglected, tradition of “political music” in the western art-music tradition, but with the division between art and society around the year 1900, a new inner schism arose in art – how could the creative artist continue her/his fight for aesthetic freedom without at the same time losing contact with “the masses”? Composers such as Hans Eisler and Paul Dessau in Germany between the wars, or Hans Werner Henze right after the war, all stressed composing “intelligible” music – not distinctly avant-garde, but still with a solid art-theoretical base – this in contrast to the more traditional political song that found direct expression through the workers’ movements. In post-war modernism one could, however,

also find composers such as Luigi Nono, who in spite of his adherence to communism, chose to create his large-scale orchestral works as a form of revolutionary utopia.

Cecilie Ore cannot be said to fit into any of these formats or directions. Her most recent vocal music is, in my opinion, more related to pre-classical vocal forms than to modernism or to the battle-song tradition of the workers’ movement, for that matter. But even if the musical expression is simplified, even pared down, it is nevertheless not simple music. On the contrary, through her writing style she insists that the technical demands of performance continue to be very high, at times with virtuoso challenges for the singers. However, the basis is different from earlier – now the expression is to be subordinated to the text – as also at times was done by Monteverdi and later by Bach.

I want to point in particular to the madrigal comedies of the late 1500s as a forerunner to Cecilie Ore’s more recent vocal works. In her music one can find many of the same aspects which made that genre so popular in the years before the breakthrough of opera with Monteverdi’s *Orfeo*: the use of humorous texts, homophonic choral sections with an extensive use of musical imitation and reiterated lines in between, where the singers characterise and comment. The origin of the concept can be traced to Orazio Cecchi’s

L'Amfiparnaso (1597) with the subtitle “comedia harmonica” or, as it is referred to in the foreword, “comedia musicale”. These madrigals were worldly and also had a highly amusing – partly satirical – character, with lively characterisations of the people they were describing: they were supposed to encourage the public’s spontaneous reaction.

Through *The Vatican Trilogy* from 2016-17, Cecilie Ore has created a form of present-day madrigal comedies, where the use of the inherent absurdity of the texts also delivers an immediate communication with the audience. This – if anything – separates the work from most other modern art music in our day. Exactly like the old madrigal comedies, *The Vatican Trilogy* is also a multi-voice, mainly homophonically written work for vocal ensemble. The texts consist of three different stories from the history of the Vatican with titles such as *Dead Pope on Trial! The Pregnant Pope!* and *The Fig Leaf Campaign!* Even though the basis for the trilogy is taken from the history of the Vatican, the work appears distinctly worldly with its underlying humorous criticism of religion and superstition.

Altogether it is possible to claim that, through her solo vocal works, ensemble pieces and choral works, Cecilie Ore has moved towards traditions that are actually older than purely instrumental music. All the works on this record are, therefore, a reminder that music essentially springs from the spoken word. With the various works on this recording Cecilie Ore is connected to a great tradition in European art music, using language as a shooting ramp for the music.

Cecilie Ore: Come to the Edge!

av Geir Johnson

Når man lytter til Cecilie Ores vokalmusikk fra de senere år, og sammenholder den med verkene fra perioden som ble hennes offentlige gjennombrudd rundt 1990, kan det synes som om hun har gjennomgått en dramatisk forvandling i estetisk henseende. Der verkene for ulike strykebesetninger på hennes første CD – Codex Temporis - var preget av en rasende intensitet, som også impliserte nesten uoverstigelige tekniske utfordringer for musikerne, fremstår dagens vokalmusikk som adskillig enklere både teknisk og uttrykksmessig. Cecilie Ores

instrumentalmusikk var av mange ansett som "uspillelig" – eller i det minste som uhyre krevende rent teknisk, og det førte kanskje til færre innspillinger, men også til en større internasjonal oppmerksomhet enn norske komponister hadde vært vant med i de foregående decennier.

Cecilie Ore var opptatt av stemmen også i flere tidligere verk – allerede hennes opus 1 Chansons des Bilitis for sopran og kammerensemble er et uttrykk for det – et skimrende, impresjonistisk verk som ikke på

noen måte kan sies å være representativt for den komponisten hun utviklet seg til. Men man trenger ikke gå lenger enn til solostykket Calliope fra 1986 for å finne elementer som er gjenkjennelige også i de øvrige instrumentale verkene. Allerede her finner man en analytisk forståelse av teksten, som leder til et forsøk på klarhet i meningsinnholdet. At dette stykket for solo sopran, basert på en tekst av Gertrude Stein, ble stående relativt alene i hennes produksjon, har nok sin grunn i at hun mot slutten av 1980-tallet i stigende grad ble opptatt av å abstrahere musikken fra mening; musikken skulle i prinsipp være en frittstående arkitektonisk struktur som skulle leve i kraft av seg selv.

Dette var hun selvsagt ikke alene om – det har på mange måter vært et bærende prinsipp i hele etterkrigsmodernismen, og bare få komponister kan sies å ha opponert mot det. Men det interessante med Cecilie Ores utvikling er i hvilken grad hun arbeider seg gjennom dette, og kommer frem til en stil og en uttrykksform som forener den tekniske kunnskapen med en tilbakevending til å sette den språklige meningen i sentrum. Samfunnskritikken får en stadig sterkere plass i hennes produksjon, og det raseriet som i utgangspunktet ble reflektert gjennom en høy intensitet i tonespråket og kravene til teknisk perfeksjon, blir vendt til en opposisjon mot sentrale utviklingstrekk i samtidens politiske liv, med et sterkt fokus på

menneskerettigheter både i historisk og nåtidig kontekst.

I denne perioden er det hun komponerer Schwirren fra 2003 for Nordic Voices (utgitt på Aurora ACD5055), som et første forsøk på å videreutvikle erfaringene fra instrumentalmusikken over i vokalmediet. Verket tar utgangspunkt i teksten "Das Fliegenpapier" av Robert Musil, som beskriver hvordan fluepapirets seige materie fanger, holder fast på og i siste instans tar livet av sine ofre: fluene. Komponisten kommenterer tørt: "Teksten blir ikke mindre rystende ved at Musil tillegger fluene menneskelige egenskaper." Schwirren representerte et oppbrudd fra det abstrakte, og en bevegelse mot et nytt uttrykk der frie dissonanser og tonalitetsplan fikk en ny betydning. Schwirren har også språket som utgangspunkt, men den innholdsmessige betoningen er fortsatt mangetydig.

Den samfunnskritiske vendingen hos Ore har etter hvert fått mange ulike sceniske uttrykk: Det musikkdramatiske verket A. – ein skuggeopera - fra 2001 (utgitt på Aurora ACD5034), ble både et nullpunkt og et vendepunkt. Verket er en scenisk installasjon for elektronikk, computergrafikk, stemmer og dans. Det er en indre monolog, hvor Agamemnon vandrer gjennom krigshistorien. I 2008 hadde Den norske opera premiere på Dead Beat Escapement - en opera om

dødsstraffens meningsløshet, slik den praktiseres i amerikanske fengsler. I 2013-15 kom det sceniske verket Adam&Eve – a Divine Comedy, en opera som tar opp temaet vold mot kvinner sett i et religionskritisk perspektiv.

En konsekvens av dette engasjementet har vært at hun i de senere år i større grad enn tidligere har orientert seg mot å skrive for den menneskelige stemmen, også ofte i form av verk for kor som BBC Singers og Ensemble 96, sangere som Eir Inderhaug og Tora Augestad, og vokalensembler som Nordic Voices. Denne dreiningen, med en sterk vektlegging av det tekstlige og språklige, har nok også en sammenheng med det tette samarbeidet hun innledet med dramaturgen og tekstforfatteren Bibbi Moslet rundt 2005. Deres intellekt og tenkemåter fant gjenklang hos hverandre, og gjennom mange år har de utviklet synopsis, libretti og materiale til de fleste av Cecilie Ores nyere verk. Gjennom dette samarbeidet tok Cecilie Ores musikalske utvikling en ny retning, og den økte interessen fikk sterke samfunnskritiske og ideologikritiske konsekvenser.

Gjennom Come to the Edge! fra 2013, opprinnelig skrevet for BBC Singers, skapte hun et korverk, som tar stilling i en av samtidens mest diskuterte rettssaker. Verket er dedisert til den russiske opposisjonelle punk-gruppen Pussy Riot, som i 2012 ble dømt til fengsel i to år for "hooliganisme

inspirert av hat til religionen", som det het i domsavsigelsen. I dette verket sammenstilles utsagn fra rettssaken med historiske sitater og utsagn om ytringsfrihetens betydning. Verket er på en og samme tid både kommenterende og henvendt til publikum. Med andre ord er det et aspekt av brechtsk Verfremdungsteknikk i hennes nye skrivestil, som både vil betrakte og vise frem.

Who do you think you are? fra 2014 er et nøkkelverk i denne utviklingen. For her tar hun utgangspunkt i nøyaktig det samme formatet som i Calliope. Men mens utgangspunktet for Calliope var en tekst av Gertrude Stein, der den amerikanske forfatteren i sin monolog leter etter sitt identifikasjonspunkt som kunstner, konstaterer den modne Cecilie Ore i 2014 at kvinner flest fortsatt står overfor en langt mer brutal virkelighet: Om de hever stemmen i det offentlige rom, utfordrer de ytringsfrihetens grenser. Dette har for mange kvinner medført trusler om lemlestelse, voldtekt og drap. Solisten i verket blir således en talskvinne for ytringsfrihet til alle de som forsøker å heve sin røst i den offentlige debatt.

"I am talking to myself and strangers" het det i Calliope fra 1986, der jeg'et søker etter sin egen stemme, og gjennom Cecilie Ores musikk finner den i en virtuos, nesten polyfon sats, der tale, sang og hvissing er integrert i et organisk hele. I Who do you think you are? er formatet det samme, men den teksten Cecilie

Ore nå benytter, er en montasje av tre ulike nivåer, satt inn i en samfunnskritisk kontekst – skrevet som en tale til nasjonalforsamlingen i anledning av 200-årsjubileet for den norske grunnloven. Nasjonalforsamlingens patosfylte feiring blir satt i relieff gjennom denne tekstmontasjen, og verket slutter med det polemiske spørsmålet: "What are we celebrating?" Dette stykket, med den ironiske undertittelen: "en politisk stand-up romanse", er vel kanskje det eneste solo vokalverk som noensinne er fremført i Stortinget. Det skjedde året etter grunnlovsjubileet – og dermed fikk en skapende kunstner for en kort tid adgang til landets fremste talerstol.

Det finnes jo en langvarig, om enn tilsidesatt, tradisjon for "politisk musikk" innenfor den vestlige kunstmusikalske tradisjon, men med skillet mellom kunst og samfunn omkring år 1900 oppsto det et nytt, indre skisma i kunsten – hvordan kunne den skapende kunstneren fortsette sin kamp for estetisk frihet uten samtidig å miste kontakten med "massene"? Komponister som Hanns Eisler og Paul Dessau i mellomkrigstidens Tyskland, eller Hans Werner Henze i hele etterkrigstiden, la alle vekt på å komponere en "forståelig" musikk – ikke utpreget avantgarde, men likevel med et solid kunstteoretisk fundament – dette til forskjell fra den mer tradisjonelle politiske sangen som kom direkte til uttrykk gjennom arbeiderbevegelsene. Innenfor etterkrigsmodernismen kunne man imidlertid

også finne komponister som Luigi Nono, som til tross for sin bekjennelse til kommunismen, valgte å realisere sine stort anlagte orkesterverk som en form for revolusjonær utopi.

Cecilie Ore kan ikke sies å passe inn i noen av disse formatene eller retningene. Hennes seneste vokalmusikk er etter mitt syn mer beslektet med førklassiske vokalformer enn med modernismen, eller med arbeiderbevegelsens kampsangtradisjon, for den del. Men selv om det musikalske uttrykket er forenklet, ja skrellet ned, er det likevel ikke en musikk som er enkel. Tvert imot fastholder hun gjennom sin skrivestil at de tekniske kravene til fremføringen fortsatt er svært høye, til tider med virtuose utfordringer til sangerne. Men utgangspunktet er et annet enn tidligere – nå skal det virtuose uttrykket underordnes teksten – slik det også til tider gjøres hos en Monteverdi og senere hos Bach.

Jeg vil spesielt peke på det sene 1500-tallets madrigalkomedie som en forløper for Cecilie Ores nyere vokalverk. For hos henne finner man mange av de samme aspektene som gjorde denne genren så populær i årene før operaens gjennombrudd med Monteverdis Orfeo: bruk av humoristiske tekster, homofone korsatser med utstrakt bruk av musikalsk imitasjon og gjentakelse stemmene imellom, der sangerne karakteriserer og kommenterer. Opprinnelsen til begrepet kan spores til Orazio

Vecchi's L'Amfiparnaso (1597), med undertittelen "comedia harmonica", eller, som det er omtalt i forordet, "comedia musicale". Disse madrigalene var verdslige, og hadde også et sterkt underholdende – til dels satirisk - preg, med livlig karakterisering av personene som de omhandlet; de skulle oppfordre publikum til spontan reaksjon.

Gjennom Vatikantrilogien fra 2016-17 har Cecilie Ore skapt en form for nåtidige madrigalkomedier, der bruken av tekstenes iboende absurditet også forløser en øyeblikkelig kommunikasjon med publikum. Det – om noe – skiller dette verket fra det meste av annen moderne kunstmusikk i våre dager. Akkurat som de gamle madrigalkomediene er også Vatikantrilogien et flerstemmig, hovedsakelig homofont skrevet vokalsembleverk. Tekstene består av tre ulike fortellinger fra Vatikanets historie med titler som: Dead Pope on Trial!, The Pregnant Pope! og The Fig Leaf Campaign! Selv om utgangspunktet for trilogien er hentet fra Vatikanets historie, fremstår verket som utpreget verdslig med sin underliggende humoristiske kritikk av tro og overtro.

Samlende kan vi si at Cecilie Ore gjennom solo vokalverk, ensemblestykker og korverk har begitt seg inn i tradisjoner som faktisk er eldre enn den rene instrumentalmusikken. Alle verkene på denne platen er derfor også en påminnelse om at musikken egentlig springer ut av språket. Med verkene som foreligger på denne innspillingen knytter Cecilie Ore an til en stor tradisjon i europeisk kunstmusikk, og tar språket tilbake til musikken.

Come to the Edge!

(dedicated to Pussy Riot)

“Come to the edge.

We might fall.

Come to the edge!”

It’s too high!

COME TO THE EDGE!

(Christopher Logue, poster poem for Guillaume Apollinaire exhibition)

“If freedom of speech is taken away, then dumb and silent we may be led,
like sheep to the slaughter.”

(George Washington)

“He who stands for nothing will fall for anything.”

(Alexander Hamilton)

“To sin by silence, when they should protest, makes cowards of men.”

(Abraham Lincoln)

“Silence in court! Accusation: You have shown disrespect towards society!

Maria Alyokhina, step forward!”

(Moscow Court)

“I am not afraid of you. I am not afraid of falsehood and fictitiousness, of sloppily
disguised deception, in the verdict of this “so-called” court, this “so-called” trial.
All you can deprive me of is “so-called” freedom. But nobody can take away my
inner freedom. This freedom goes on living with every person who is not indifferent.”

(Pussy Riot member Maria Alyokhina, excerpt from the Closing Statement)

**“Come to the edge.
We might fall.
Come to the edge!”**

(Christopher Logue)

“Proclaim the truth and do not be silent through fear.”

(St. Catherine of Siena)

“Speak your mind, even if your voice shakes.”

(Maggie Kuhn)

“Feel the fear and do it anyway!”

(Susan Jeffers)

“Silence in court! Accusation: You have committed a grave violation of public order! Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, step forward!”

(Moscow Court)

“We have stopped weeping. we have lost our ability to cry, we have desperately shouted with all our might, but now, our voices have been taken away.”

(Pussy Riot member Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, excerpt from the Closing Statement)

**“Come to the edge.
We might fall.
Come to the edge!”**

(Christopher Logue)

“Take away the right to say “fuck” and you take away the right to say “fuck the government.”

(Lenny Bruce)

“We cannot be sure of having something to live for unless we are willing to die for it.”

(Ernesto “Che” Guevara)

“Cowards die many times before their deaths.
The valiant never taste of death but once.”

(William Shakespeare)

“Silence in court! Conviction: Guilty! You are sentenced to two years in prison for hooliganism motivated by religious hatred! Yekaterina Samutsevich, step forward!”

(Moscow Court)

“We expected a guilty verdict. We are nobodies, and we have lost.
On the other hand, we have won. The system cannot conceal the repressive nature of this trial.
The entire world can now see that this criminal case has been fabricated. That is all. Thank you.”

(Pussy Riot member Yekaterina Samutsevich, excerpt from the Closing Statement)

“COME TO THE EDGE!

And they came.

And he pushed.

And they flew.”

(Christopher Logue)

“You can cage the singer but not the song.”

(Harry Belafonte)

“Open all the doors, tear off your epaulets. Come, taste freedom with us.”

(Pussy Riot protest song)

Reconstruction of texts: Bibbi Moslet & Cecilie Ore

The Poem '*Come to the Edge!*' by *Christopher Logue* is used with kind permission from Rosemary Hill.

Who do you think you are?

Ladies and gentlemen! 2014 – amazing isn't it! We are celebrating 200 years gone by since some brave men decided that we needed freedom...of course, it took another 100 years before women could feel free... but, anyway, what is freedom?

Shall I tell you what I found in my mailbox today?

What is freedom of speech, for instance. Is it freedom to... or freedom from... or as written in the Norwegian Constitution, article 100: 'It is the responsibility of the authorities of the State to create conditions that facilitate open and enlightened public discourse...'

Shall I tell you what I found, what I found in my mailbox today?

'Open and enlightened public discourse...' What does it mean? Are we creating such conditions?

Shall I tell you what I found, what I found in my mailbox, my mailbox today?

"Keep your mouth shut you cock-sucking whore. You have no talent or intelligence. One day I'll cut your throat and shove my knife up your pussy. You deserve to be raped! If you seek protection I'll come after you. I'll kill you when you least expect it. You are never safe."

...never safe? Do I deserve to be raped? ...Why do I have to keep my mouth shut? 'There shall be freedom of expression', but for whom? What kind of freedom is this?

Shall I tell you what I found, what I found in my mailbox today?

"Who do you think you are? Go drown yourself you ugly, stupid, stinking bitch. Time has come. I'll wait for you outside your house. If you refuse to meet me I'll hack your body to pieces and hang them on a meat hook. I'll fry your tits in butter and mmm... how delicious you will taste, you feminist whore!"

My goodness! ...Where does this anger come from? ...Feminist whore? ...I am a journalist, a writer, a politician, a musician and an artist... I am a woman. What's wrong with that? Why must I be silenced?

Shall I tell you what I found in my mailbox today?

"Watch out before you open your big fat mouth, you ass-licking cuntface. I don't want to hear your fucking voice! You are a slut and a whore and I'll find you one day. I'll rape your children and then I'll fuck your ass to pieces with a baseball bat. I'll make you taste your own blood and wipe my hands with joy when I know the job is done. I want you dead! Die, just die!"

Wow! ...he wants my blood! ...somebody wants me dead!

Who are these anonymous, faceless brutes? Why do we tolerate this?

Hasn't everyone the right to freedom of expression?

2014 - what are we celebrating?

Text: Bibbi Moslet & Cecilie Ore

The Vatican Trilogy

Dead Pope on Trial!

They've been poisoned and strangled and killed by jealous husbands. They've had their skulls crushed with hammers, their eyes gouged out, nose and lips cut off. They've been thrown in prison, and some of them simply disappeared.

But who, do you ask, was treated like this?

Popes! Popes in the Catholic Church!

And one was even dug up from his grave and put on trial!

A dead man on trial? What was his name?

In the year 897 the rotting and mouldering corpse of Pope Formosus was dressed in papal vestments, dragged into court and propped upon a throne for full cross-examination. He was accused of committing perjury and violating canon law!

And who, do you ask, accused him of this?

Pope Stephen VII!

He screamed, shouted, and yelled at the corpse. A deacon tried to defend the dead man, but in vain and the jury of priests found Formosus guilty, guilty on all charges.

But..., but how do you punish a corpse?

His rotting body was stripped of papal vestments and dressed up as a peasant. But this was not enough! Three fingers used for benediction were cut off and then the body was thrown into a common grave. But this was not enough! Pope Stephen dug Formosus up again and dragged him through the streets of Rome. But this was still not enough! They threw him in the Tiber River with heavy weights attached.

With heavy weights attached? And gone forever?

Oh no, not gone forever! Miracles started happening! Formosus' restless ghost appeared and scared them to no end! Miracles! The body was found washed up on the riverside entangled in a fisherman's net. Miracles! They put him in a secret grave to give his soul eternal peace.

Miracles..., eternal peace... Is this the end of the story?

Oh no! Heavens no! Pope Theodore II came along! He dug Formosus up again, dressed his bones in papal garments, brought him to St. Peter's and reburied him.

But..., but how many times can you bury a corpse?

Many times, it seems, many times! Pope Sergius III reopened the grave and put Formosus on trial yet again. Three more fingers and his head were chopped off and once more the mutilated corpse was tossed into the river of Tiber.

And why, do you ask, why cut off the head of a man already dead?
We don't know! We don't know! We don't know!
Some say the headless corpse was found once more entangled in a fisherman's net. The remains were brought to St. Peter's and buried a very last time, while priests and people sang psalms and hymns with candles and incense burning.

And there he lies until the Vatican decides to dig him up again.

The Pregnant Pope!

She was young, intelligent, courageous and wise...but she was a woman...

Who was this?

A female pope disguised as a man! Her name was Pope John VIII!

A female pope? Disguised as a man? How intriguing! When was this?

In 853 she was elected pope and reigned for almost 3 years. She was highly respected by the cardinals, bishops and priests. But no one knew she was a woman.

No one knew she was a woman? Was her secret not revealed?

Oh dear! Pope John got pregnant and gave birth to a stillborn baby boy!

God forbid! A pope giving birth? Where did this event take place?

During a papal procession on Via Sacra her labour started suddenly and everyone was taken by surprise!

What a scandal! How unfortunate! Did anybody help her?

They bound her feet, tied her to a horse's tail and dragged her through the streets of Rome. She was beaten and stoned till she finally died.

Oh dear! What a sordid and gruesome story!

On her grave was written. `Petre, Pater Patrum, Papisse Proditum! Oh Peter, Father of Fathers, betray the childbearing of the woman Pope! They called her Pope Joan.

This should have been the end of the story, but no!

They invented an extraordinary chair with a hole in the seat! All the would-be popes were seated and lifted high and had their genitalia prodded and examined by a cardinal!

Their genitalia prodded and examined by a cardinal?

When satisfied they announced the result: Habet duos testiculos et bene pendent. Mas nobis nomen est. He has two testicles and they dangle nicely. Our nominee is a man!

But,...but is this incredible story really true?

Yes! There is evidence! One chair can be seen in the Vatican Museum and another at the Louvre in Paris. The chairs were in use for 600 years!

600 years? Did they fear another woman would embarrass them again?

Oh heavens yes! The Vatican burned and falsified papers and texts denying the existence of Pope Joan ever since!

Denying the existence of Pope Joan ever since? What a shame! What are they afraid of?

She was young, intelligent, courageous and wise...but she was a woman...

The Fig Leaf Campaign!

There is a secret room with a secret chest with a secret drawer in the Vatican Museum.

Do you want to hear what's hidden inside? ...you won't believe it!

There are hundreds of penises hidden in a drawer in a chest in a room in the Vatican Museum!

And how, do you ask, how did the phalluses end up there?

The Vatican chopped them off! All the beautiful sculptures had their penises chopped off! - And they covered all remaining genitalia with fig leaves... both men and women alike.

But..., but why this dramatic destruction of art?

Popes in the Renaissance declared:

Nudity is unholy and sinful, leading to perversion and diabolic acts!

Good heavens! Sinful and unholy? Oh dear, oh dear! Diabolic and perverted? When will this comedy end?

The vandalized and mutilated Adams and Eves are still on display until the Vatican decides to make them all naked and natural again.

There is a secret room with a secret chest with a secret drawer in the Vatican Museum.

© Texts: Bibbi Moslet & Cecilie Ore



Cecilie Ore (1954) started out studying piano at the Norwegian Academy of Music and in Paris (1974-81), before she turned to composition studies at the Institute of Sonology in Utrecht and with Ton de Leeuw at the Sweelinck Conservatory in Amsterdam (1981-86).

The tetralogies *Codex Temporis* and *Tempora Mutantur* and the orchestral piece *Nunc et Nunc* are among her most important instrumental works from the 80's and 90's. Since year 2000 she has worked on text-based projects with an increasingly critical glance on society. The stage work *A. - a shadow opera*, *Schwirren* for vocal ensemble, the chamber opera *Dead Beat Escapement*, *Come to the Edge!* for choir and the political stand-up romance *Who do you think you are?* all exemplify this. The themes range from death penalty to freedom of speech.

Cecilie Ore has won both national and international prizes for her work. She has been performed and commissioned by major orchestra, ensembles and choirs as the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Mordern, BBC Singers, and the Norwegian National Opera & Ballet.

Her chamber opera: *Adam & Eve - a Divine Comedy* was premiered at the Bergen International Festival in 2015.

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Cecilie Ore (1954) studerte klaver ved Norges musikkhøgskole og i Paris og deretter komposisjon ved Institutt for Sonologi i Utrecht og med Ton de Leeuw ved Sweelinck-konservatoriet i Amsterdam.

Blant hennes viktigste instrumentale verk på 80- og 90 tallet er tetralogiene *Codex Temporis*, *Tempora Mutantur* og orkesterverket *Nunc et Nunc*. Etter år 2000 har hun i stadig større grad arbeidet med tekstbasert og samfunnskritisk musikk. Det sceniske verket *A. - ein skuggeopera*, *Schwirren* for vokalensemble, kammeroperaen *Dead Beat Escapement*, korverket *Come to the Edge!* og den politiske stand-up romansen *Who do you think you are?* er alle eksempler på dette. Temaene spenner fra dødsstraff til ytringsfrihet.

Cecilie Ore har vunnet både nasjonale og internasjonale priser for sine verk, deriblant Arne Nordheims Komponistpris i 2004 og Lindeman Prisen i 2015. Hun har bl.a. blitt fremført av BBC Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Modern, BBC Singers samt en rekke norske og nordiske ensembler.

Hennes kammeropera *Adam & Eve - a Divine Comedy* ble urfremført ved Festspillene i Bergen 2015.

www.cecilieore.no



The chamber choir **Ensemble 96** consist of 24 highly qualified singers, is one of Norway's leading vocal ensembles, and has gained its reputation through many critically acclaimed concerts, premieres and CD recordings. It has a particular focus on contemporary music and seeks to expand the traditional choir concert by means of collaborations with other artists, including dancers, actors and visual artists. The ensemble often presents a mix of contemporary music and classical songs. The musical director and conductor is Nina Therese Karlsen, who holds an MA in Choir Conducting from the Norwegian Academy of Music.

Ensemble 96's CD Immortal Nystedt, on the label 2L, was nominated for two Grammy awards in 2007, Best Surround Sound Album and Best Choral Performance. In September 2007 Ensemble 96 and its previous conductor Øystein Fevang received the Choral Award in Norway. The choir, with conductor Kjetil Almenning, represented Norway at the Nordic-Baltic Choral Festival in August 2008. The choir received a second Grammy nomination in 2011 for their CD Kind. It receives financial support from Arts Council Norway.

Ensemble 96 has made first performances of works by, amongst others, Knut Nystedt, Synne Skouen, Antonio Bibalo, Wolfgang Plagge, Jon Balke, Andrew Smith, Kjell Mørk Karlsen, Kjetil Bjørnstad, Trond Lindheim, Olav Anton Thommesen, Julian Skar, Marcus Paus, Frank Havrøy, Martin Ødegaard and Tyler Futrell.

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Kammerkoret **Ensemble 96** består i dag av 24 høyt kvalifiserte sangere og er anerkjent både nasjonalt og internasjonalt – gjennom konserter, (ur)fremføringer av samtidsmusikk og ikke minst sine prisbelønnede CD-innspillinger. Både Immortal Nystedt (2L, 2005) og Kind (2L, 2010) ble GRAMMY-nominert for Best Choral Performance i henholdsvis 2006 og 2011. Immortal Nystedt ble videre kåret til en av «Norgeshistoriens 100 beste plater» av Morgenbladet i 2011.

Koret arbeider målbevisst med å opprettholde en tydelig profil som samtidsmusikk-ensemble. Nina T. Karlsen har siden 2011 vært korets faste kunstneriske leder. Hun er utdannet dirigent, sanger og musikkpedagog ved Norges musikkhøgskole.

Kammerkoret Ensemble 96 skal på et høyt kunstnerisk nivå fremføre krevende korverker med spesiell vekt på nyere musikk. Koret arbeider målbevisst med å opprettholde en tydelig profil som samtidsmusikk-ensemble. En stor del av repertoaret er skrevet av nålevende komponister. Koret har stått for en rekke førstegangsoppføringer av utenlandske komponisters verker i Norge.

www.ensemble96.no



Eir Inderhaug is regarded as among the finest Norwegian singers and stands out on opera stages around Europe. She has done Gepopo and Venus in *Le grand macabre* with great success at Komische Oper in Berlin, The Royal Theatre in Copenhagen and at the Norwegian Opera & Ballett. The last appearance earned her the Critic's Award for 2014. Among her other roles are Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, Despina in *Così fan tutte* and Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*. In 2017 she premiered her own piece 'I AM Lucia', directed by Bentein Baardson.

Inderhaug has sung Morton Feldman's *Neither* in Dresden and in Krzysztof Penderecki's *Devils of Loudon* at The Royal Theatre of Copenhagen. She has also been a guest at Bayerische Staatsoper, Theater Bremen and Göteborgsoperan, and been a member of the soloist cast at the opera in Nürnberg and Deutsche Oper am Rhein, including roles like Despina, Olympia, Blonde and Ännchen.

Her opera debut was in 1999 as Barbarina in *Figaro* at The Royal Theatre in Copenhagen. Eir Inderhaug is also well known for her interpretation of Gudrun in *Spelet om Heilage Olav* (The Saint Olav Drama), and has sung the part of Solveig in Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* at Gålå, and several CD recordings. Eir has her education from Rogaland Music Conservatory, The Royal Opera Academy of Copenhagen and the soloist class at The Royal Danish Music Conservatory.

Eir Inderhaug har etablert seg som en av de fremste norske sangerne og gjør seg bemerket på operascener rundt om i Europa. Rollen som Gepopo og Venus i *Le grand macabre* har hun sunget med stor suksess ved Komische Oper i Berlin, Det Kongelige Teater i København og Den Norske Opera & Ballett. For sistnevnte ble hun tildelt Kritikerprisen 2014. På Den Norske Opera har hun også gjort Adele i *Flaggermusen*, Rosina i *Barberen i Sevilla*, Despina i *Così fan tutte* og Nattens dronning i *Tryllefløyten*. I 2017 hadde hun premiere på sitt eget stykke 'jeg ER Lucia', i regi av Bentein Baardson.

Inderhaug har sunget i Morton Feldmans *Neither* i Dresden og i Krzysztof Penderecki's *Devils of Loudon* ved Det Kongelige Teater i København. Hun har også gjestet operahus som Bayerische Staatsoper, Theater Bremen og Göteborgsoperan, og vært fast solist ved operaen i Nürnberg og Deutsche Oper am Rhein. Ved de to sistnevnte har hun sunget roller som Despina i *Così fan tutte*, Olympia i Hoffmanns eventyr, Blonde i *Bortførelsen fra Seraillet* og Ännchen i *Jegerbruden*.

Operadebuten hennes var i 1999 som Barbarina i Figaros bryllup ved Det Kongelige Teater i København, men for en del norske TV-tittere ble hun et bekjentskap allerede i 1991 da hun vant NRKs program *Talentiaden*. Eir Inderhaug er også kjent for sin tolkning av Gudrun i *Spelet om Heilage Olav*, har sunget rollen som Solveig i *Peer Gynt-spelet* på Gålå og sunget på flere CD-innspillinger, blant andre Okkenhaugs "Eg veit ei lita jente".

Eir har sin utdannelse fra Rogaland Musikkonservatorium, Det Kongelige Operaakademi i København og solistklassen ved Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium.

www.eirinderhaug.no



Nordic Voices was formed in 1996 and consists of the singers Tone Braaten, Ingrid Hanken, Ebba Rydh, Per Kristian Amundrød, Frank Havrøy and Rolf Magne Asser. All of the members are graduates of either the Norwegian Academy of Music or the Opera Academy in Oslo, and together they share a broad background in opera, composition, church music and conducting. Nordic Voices' repertoire ranges from medieval to contemporary music; they are probably the most active ensemble in Norway during the past fifteen years to commission and perform new works in their genre. The ensemble's well-conceived and creative concert programming – often involving a subtle element of humour – has led them to become a much sought-after group on the international scene. Nordic Voices have released five recordings, and participated on many more, which have led to several nominations for the Norwegian Grammy "Spellemannprisen". They have won several awards, including the prestigious "Performer of the Year" 2014 from the Norwegian Society of Composers.

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Nordic Voices ble dannet i 1996 og består av medlemmene Tone Braaten, Ingrid Hanken, Ebba Rydh, Per Kristian Amundrød, Frank Havrøy og Rolf Magne Asser. Ensembles medlemmer er alle utdannet fra Norges musikkhøgskole og Statens Operahøgskole i Oslo, og har en bred bakgrunn fra både opera, komposisjon, kirkemusikk og direksjon. Nordic Voices' repertoar spenner fra middelalder til samtidsmusikk, og de er kanskje den gruppen som har bestilt og urfremført flest verk i sin sjanger i Norge den siste tiden. Ensembles forkjærlighet for nitidig og kreativ konsertplanlegging, gjerne med humoren liggende under som element, gjør at de er blitt attraktive på den internasjonale konsertscenen. Nordic Voices har gitt ut 5 egne plater og deltatt på mange fler, noe som har gitt flere Spellemannprisminasjoner. De har mottatt både Fartein Valen-prisen for sitt arbeid innen samtidsmusikk og Rolf Gammeleng-prisen for sine plateinnspillinger. Nordic Voices ble for 2014 tildelt den høythengende prisen "Årets Utøver" av Norsk Komponistforening for sitt arbeid med ny musikk av norske komponister.

www.nordicvoices.no

edg e!

Who do you think you are? Recorded 6 December 2017 in Rainbow Studio
Commissioned by Oslo Griegfestival with support from Fritt Ord og Det Norske Komponistfond
Balance engineer: Peer Espen Ursfjord

The Vatican Triolgy. Recorded 15 May 2017 and 2 November 2018 in Rainbow Studio
Commissioned by Nordic Voices with support from Det Norske Komponistfond
Balance engineer: Peer Espen Ursfjord

Come to the Edge! Recorded in Jar kirke 28-29 September 2018
Commissioned by BBC Radio 3 and Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival
Balance engineer: Jørn Pedersen

Producer and editor: Jørn Pedersen

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Cecilie Ore

1 Come to the Edge! 19:31

Ensemble 96

Nina T. Karlsen, conductor

2 Who do you think you are? 07:11

Eir Inderhaug, soprano

3-5 The Vatican Trilogy

Dead Pope on Trial! 22:10

The Pregnant Pope! 12:04

The Fig Leaf Campaign! 06:10

Nordic Voices

Texts by Bibbi Moslet and Cecilie Ore



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