

NJÅL SPARBO

VERDENS VEIER





QCD 9411 - VERDENS VEIER

Njål Sparbo - voice

Björn Nyman - clarinets

André Orvik - violin

Vegard Johnsen - violin

Jon Sønstebø - viola

Sverre Barratt-Due - cello

Steinar Haugerud - double bass

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1 Svevnens kjærleik

Music by Kjell Mørk Karlsen (b. 1947)

Voice, Bb clarinet, and string quintet

Lyrics by Jon Fosse (b. 1959)

alt var berre til stades
klårt og lysande
som ein dag utan natt
som eit liv utan svevn
utan svevnens store kjærleik
av gløymsle
av å vera borte
av å vera ein annan stad
av å vera der den andre er
av å vera i den andres hand
av å vera berre som den andres hand og
draum

2 Haustsonate

Music by Henning Sommero (b. 1952)

Voice, Bb clarinet, and string quintet

Lyrics by Edvard Hoem (b. 1949)

Så stilnar ståket etter sommarfesten,
det mørknar over land, men stjerner skin.
Du tenner lys og lyttar etter vinden,
drar for gardinene og skjenker vin.
Det er ei tid for alt, men alt går over,
og ikkje alle spørsmål har eit svar.
Vi ber det med oss, det som eingong var.

Alt neste morgon verkar skogen framand,
og stranda ligg forlaten, utan spor,
og alle dagane vi var der saman
ligg gøymt i minnet, om dei saknar ord.
Så smiler du, og du spring ut i regnet og
hentar lykke heim frå rusket ver.
Vi er i livet, det er no det skjer!

Når lauvet gulnar, kjem det lange stunder
da ettertanken drar deg stille bort,
i alt du seier ligg det noko under,
av det som før er sagt og tenkt og gjort.
Vi hentar sommarmøblar inn frå hagen.
Kor lenge får vi vera her i lag?
Vi kjenner svaret: Dagen er i dag.

3 why?

Music by Ruth Bakke (b. 1947)

Voice, Bb clarinet/bass clarinet, and string quintet

Lyrics by Edward Estlin Cummings (1894 - 1962)

why
don't
be
sil
ly
,o no in-
deed;
money
can't do(never
did &
never will)any
damn
thing
:far
from it;you
're wrong,my friend. But
what does
do,
has always done
;&
will do alw
-ays something
is(guess)yes
you're
right:my enemy
. Love

4 Grensen

Music and lyrics by Ketil Bjørnstad (b. 1952)

Arr. for voice, Bb clarinet, and string quintet by Njål Sparbo

Langt der ute

I det fjerne

glir en båt

Jeg skulle gjerne

vært en stund

med dine drømmer

dine himler

dine strømer

Nå er du deg selv som nærest

Jeg kan ikke nå deg mer

Men jeg ligger her tett ved deg

Midt i natten, drømmer med deg

Mørket synker

Sneen daler

Det er stort i dine saler

Hysj, du ler

og mumler stille

Drømmen tar deg

dit du ville

Dagen kommer, lyset flommer

Og du smiler, trykker min hånd

La meg ligge helt, helt nære

Inntil grensen. Lytte, være-

5 Med en vannilje

Music by Kjell Habbestad (b. 1955)

Voice, Bb clarinet, and string quintet

Lyrics by Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906)

Se, Marie, hvad jeg bringer;
blomsten med de hvide vinger.
På de stille strømme båren
svam den drømmetung i våren.

Vil du den til hjemmet vie,
fæst den på dit bryst, Marie;
bag dens blade da sig dølge
vil en dyb og stille bølge.
Vokt dig, barn, for tjernets strømme.
Farligt, farligt der at drømme!
Nøkken lader som han sover; –
liljer leger ovenover.

Barn, din barm er tjernets strømme.
Farligt, farligt der at drømme; –
liljer leger ovenover; –
nøkken lader som han sover.

6 Til hjertene

Music by Halvor Haug (b. 1952)

Arr. for voice, Bb clarinet, and string quintet by Njål Sparbo

Lyrics by Gunnar Reiss-Andersen (1896 - 1964)

Glem aldri henne
du aldri møtte, –
som kanskje møter
deg etter døden.

Glem aldri henne
som kanskje ventet
på å få møte
deg hele livet.

Glem aldri henne
som har din lengsel.
Glem aldri henne
for den du elsker.

Glem aldri henne
for hun alene
er det du elsker
i den du elsker.

7 Jadis et naguère

Music by Bjørn Howard Kruse (b. 1946)

Voice, Bb clarinet, and string quintet

Lyrics by Paul Verlaine (1844 – 1896)

Le son du cor s'afflige vers les bois
D'une douleur on veut croire orpheline

La lune blanche
Luit dans les bois;
De chaque branche
Part une voix
Sous la ramée...
Ô bien-aimée.

L'étang reflète,
Profond miroir,
La silhouette
Du saule noir
Où le vent pleure...
Rêvons, c'est l'heure.

Un vaste et tendre
Apaisement
Semble descendre
Du firmament
Que l'astre irise...
C'est l'heure exquise.

De la musique avant toute chose,
Et pour cela préfère l'Impair
Plus vague et plus soluble dans l'air,
Sans rien en lui qui pèse ou qui pose.

Fuis du plus loin la Pointe assassine,
L'Esprit cruel et le Rire impur,
Qui font pleurer les yeux de l'Azur,
Et tout cet ail de basse cuisine!

Prends l'éloquence et tords-lui son cou !
Tu feras bien, en train d'énergie,
De rendre un peu la Rime assagie.
Si l'on n'y veille, elle ira jusqu'où ?

Que ton vers soit la bonne aventure
Eparse au vent crispé du matin
De la musique encore et toujours!
Que ton vers soit la chose envolée

Qu'on sent qui fuit d'une âme en allée
Vers d'autres cieux à d'autres amours.

8 Verdens veier

Music by Per Arne Glorvigen (b. 1963)

Arr. for voice, Bb clarinet, and string quintet by Njål Sparbo

Lyrics by Jan Erik Vold (b. 1939)

– verden
og verdens veier, havet
gresset skogene byene, vi
og Stein Mehrens
vakre linjer: Der stien tar slutt
må du virkelig videre. Skyve
grenene tilside og gå
ut mot verden – ja! og man kunne
spørre: Er verden et steinkast
unna? Er verden noe som venter
bak neste hjørne? Er verden der
jeg alltid ikke er? – man kunne spørre
(ved måneskinn): Hvilken
verden –

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Njål Sparbo

After his inaugural concert in 1991, Njål Sparbo has emerged as one of Norway's most dynamic and versatile vocalists, with an exceptionally expansive repertoire that spans opera, art song, and sacred music. His keen interest in contemporary compositions has resulted in numerous commissions, world premieres, staged productions, and recordings. His engagements encompass major Norwegian opera companies, orchestras, and choirs, as well as performances in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, England, Scotland, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Romania, Netherlands, Belgium, France, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Russia, Ukraine, Japan, South Korea, and the USA.

"Norwegian songs have played a vital role in my entire professional journey. Upon receiving the State Work Grant in 1997-1999 and 2005-2008, I embraced the opportunity to delve deep into the Norwegian song repertoire. Norwegian composers are frequent features in my concert programs, and I've actively participated in numerous premieres. This anthology presents a collection of songs that I cherish from various eras. While the majority of these songs were initially composed for voice and piano, I chose to enrich the recordings by collaborating with a diverse ensemble of musicians, infusing the renditions with richer nuances, heightened fullness, and musical contrasts."

For further information, please visit www.sparbo.com and www.quattro.no

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Norwegian Songs, Vol. 1: Norge, mitt Norge! ('Norway, My Norway!') contains music and folk tune arrangements by composers born between 1812 and 1881. This era has bequeathed us with songs that hold a revered place in the Norwegian cultural heritage. While some may appear overly nationalistic by contemporary standards, during their time, they epitomized a crucial sense of national consciousness. In the recording, Knut Nystedt and Njål Sparbo adapted a selection of songs for voice and string quintet.

Norwegian Songs, Vol. 2: Natt og Dag ('Night and Day'), contains music from composers born between 1882-1952. All songs are adapted for voice, harp, and string quintet by Njål Sparbo. The selection, while not aiming for comprehensiveness from a music-historical perspective, is instead curated based on personal enjoyment, rarity, and suitability for arrangements with bass-baritone, harp, and string quintet. The recording highlights works by 18 Norwegian composers who, beyond the national romantic period, explored new forms of expression, skillfully blending elements from both European and Norwegian art song traditions.

Norwegian Songs, Vol. 3: Verdens veier ('Ways of the World') contains music from composers born between 1946-1963, adapted for voice, clarinet, and string quintet. The song selection involved dialogue with composers, most of whom reworked and adapted the pieces themselves. Exceptions include Ketil Bjørnstad's 'Grensen' ('The Border'), Halvor Haug's 'Til hjertene' ('To the Hearts') and Per Arne Glorvigen's 'Verdens veier' ('Paths of the World'), adapted for the ensemble by Njål Sparbo.

Norwegian Songs, Vol. 4: Tida veit ('Time Knows') includes music from composers born between 1958-1981, with arrangements for voice, clarinet, and string quintet, except Henrik Hellstenius' "Lost in Life," set for voice, clarinet, and string quartet. The composers created most of the arrangements, with the exception of Ola Gjeilo's 'If thou must love me,' arranged for the ensemble by Geoff Lawson, and Ståle Kleiberg's 'Det finst ei stille' ('There Exists a Silence'), arranged by Njål Sparbo. Karl Seglem's 'Auge i vind' ('Eye in the Wind') is originally written for solo voice, but the composer graciously contributed to the recording with his goat horn.

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