



# Animal Universe

Christina Bjørkøe, piano

Anders Koppel (b. 1947)

Anders Nordentoft (b. 1957)

John Frandsen (b. 1956)

Peter Bruun (b. 1968)

Eva Noer Kondrup (b. 1964)

Anders Brødsgaard (b. 1955)

Birgitte Alsted (b. 1942)

Andy Pape (b. 1955)

Karsten Fundal (b. 1966)

Amir Mahyar Tafreshipour (b. 1974)

Mogens Christensen (b. 1955)

Erik Ørum von Spreckelsen (b. 1961)

World premiere recordings



Danish Arts  
Foundation

## Anders Koppel *Grævlingen* (The badger) (2018)

1	I.	1:07
2	II.	1:35
3	III.	2:31

## Anders Nordentoft *Edderkop* (Spider) (2018)

4	I. Edderkoppen spadserer en tur (The spider takes a walk)	2:06
5	II. Edderkoppen spinder sit spind (The spider spinning its web)	1:22
6	III. Edderkoppen hersker over sine vævninger (The spider rules over its weaving)	3:30

## John Frandsen *Hippopotamus* (2018)

7	I.	1:00
8	II.	1:00
9	III.	1:04

## Peter Bruun *Frø* (Frog) (2018)

10	I. Tænksom frø tar springet (Thoughtful frog takes a leap)	1:35
11	II. Tænksom frø og forsigtig fugl (Thoughtful frog and careful bird)	1:46
12	III. Frygtsom frø falder (Fearful frog falls)	2:41

## Eva Noer Kondrup *Sæl* (Seal) (2018)

13	I.	0:37
14	II.	0:46
15	III.	2:05

## Anders Brødsgaard *Chameleon Variations* (2019)

16	Theme: A Day in the Life ...	2:47
17	Var. I: Landscape. Mother and Baby. Something in the Air	2:46
18	Var. II: Chameleon Love Call	2:09
19	Var. III: Encore: A Chameleon in Paris	2:56

<b>Birgitte Alsted <i>Skildpadden drømmer ... hvad?</i></b> (The turtle dreams ... what?) (2019)		
20	I.	3:11
21	II.	2:40
22	III.	2:45
<b>Andy Pape <i>Loxodóntula</i> (2019)</b>		
23	I.	1:09
24	II.	1:32
25	III.	1:27
<b>Karsten Fundal <i>Trækfuglen</i> (Migratory bird) (2019)</b>		
26	I.	0:42
27	II.	2:03
28	III.	2:58
<b>Amir Mahyar Tafreshipour <i>Den persiske gepard</i></b> (The Persian cheetah) (2018)		
29	I. En lille gepard er født (A small cheetah is born)	1:55
30	II. Jagtoplevelsen (The hunting experience)	1:28
31	III. Geparden og mennesket (The cheetah and man)	2:14
<b>Mogens Christensen <i>Spilopper</i> (2019)</b>		
32	I. Hoppe-loppe (Jumping flea)	1:17
33	II. Loppetjans (Flea job)	1:02
34	III. Loppedans (Flea dance)	1:09
<b>Erik Ørum von Spreckelsen <i>Sandløber</i> (The sanderling) (2019)</b>		
35	I.	0:48
36	II.	1:47
37	III.	1:57

Total 67:27

## Zoo-etudes

By Andrew Mellor

Why has the etude proved such a durable musical form? Maybe because of the challenge, irresistible to composers, of finding aesthetically pleasing solutions to varied technical propositions. The history of the etude can be described as a long, slow dance between those two parameters. The form started out as the simple 'study' of its title, many piano students in particular growing all-too-familiar with the dry technical exercises of Muzio Clementi and others. Chopin is credited with reimagining the etude as a technical workout capable of plumbing the deepest expressions. But Bach had surely been there before, writing whole volumes of works that were etudes in all but name.

The etude flourishes in modern-day Denmark, a country whose composers have traditionally relished the challenge of writing music within strict criteria, who have long been keen to extend their creativity by tempering it with systems, series or ascetic design features. That process has delivered music of extreme focus while also heightening imagination, clarity and power.

The set of 12 etudes that make up *Animal Universe* takes the idea a step further by employing a universal expressive component. How best to give a piece of music with technical focus and pedagogic intent a clear expressive component and an immediate sense of fun? By commissioning etudes associated with particular animals, that's how. It was an inspired idea, and another with roots extending deep into musical history.

'It has always been a dream of mine to commission piano works from Danish composers', writes the pianist and pedagogue Christina Bjørkøe in the preface to the set of 12 etudes she ordered from as many composers in the last years of the 2010s. 'Suddenly the idea arrived to commission a cycle of piano etudes using animals as a common theme'. The works were conceived partly for her piano students at the Danish National Academy of Music on the island of Funen.

Each etude is conceived in three movements according to a design scheme laid down by Bjørkøe: a 'Concert etude' is combined with what she describes as two 'younger siblings – a light etude for intermediate students and a very simple etude for beginners'. Bjørkøe's conservatoire colleague Mogens Christensen was her first sounding board for the project and one of the composers commissioned. 'By connecting the

etudes to an animal, they also gained a stronger poetic content that both children and adults have the opportunity to relate to', he writes in his preface to the cycle. In the spirit of sets of etudes down musical history, the idea meant potentially disparate works by twelve different composers might also be bound more tightly together. As a result, Christensen says, the work 'became much more coherent than we had dreamed'.

The door to the menagerie is opened with the humble short-legged omnivore that is the badger, brought to life by one of Denmark's great music polymaths, **Anders Koppel**. The creature's lumbering gait, hugging the ground, is heard in the low registers of the first etude, a short journey in the form of a long cadence. The spirit of Mozart, Gershwin and more blow through the second, while the third flops down to rest after a ragtime based on the material of the first.

Clear narrative and direct communication have always been hallmarks of the music of **Anders Nordentoft**. He gives us his spider straight. First it creeps around in groups of three notes that suggest the three syllables of the Danish for spider, 'edd-er-kop', growing in energy. The second etude depicts the spider spinning his web and the third shows the arachnid as the master of his creation, steely and all-seeing as the music spreads out from the middle to occupy the entire keyboard.

As well as being one of the pillars of Danish music life, **John Frandsen** has long proved himself able to wrestle with big themes and forms, often finding intimacy in the context of largesse. As if to provide an evidential metaphor for that summary, Frandsen brings us the biggest animal of this little carnival: the hippopotamus. His set consists simply of three versions of the same piece in which the

beast lumbers through an 'Allegro brutale' requiring increasingly ability and technique of the performer.

**Peter Bruun** straddles the worlds of popular and classical music. His works have been described as a meeting of Danish New Simplicity with American Minimalism. Both styles are reflected in his first study-portrait of a frog, 'Tænksom frø tar springet' (Thoughtful frog takes a leap). In 'Tænksom frø og forsigtig fugl' (Thoughtful frog and careful bird) and 'Frygtsom frø falder' (Fearful frog falls), the same base harmonic material – ending in an ambiguous oscillation between major and minor – is made more elaborate and expressive. There are blue notes in the central etude and rhapsodic gestures in the last.

**Eva Noer Kondrup's** images of a seal glisten like the amphibian's wet fur, using the piano's keyboard and

pedals to create an impressionistic image of the animal, far off and perhaps even mythical. The music's merging of playfulness with thoughtfulness and its long resonance are built in from the start. But the set develops. In the second etude, proud little fanfares punctuate the undulating wash of the first. The third alights upon something like a tangible statement before evaporating.

**Anders Brødsgaard** has long believed in the best music's capacity to unite the technical and the sensual, which make him a natural choice to write etudes. For his chameleon, he calls on another form: music's own centuries-old, 'chameleonic' tradition of taking a theme and disguising it with variations. The theme is presented in 'A Day in the Life': a melody of three notes curling around D, E and F like the reptile's tongue, and with the Danish children's song 'Jeg har fanget mig en

myg' ('I have caught a mosquito'). Three variations follow as the creature shifts in outward appearance but retains that inner theme. Perhaps we hear its tongue in action in the rapid upwards glissando of the first variation, 'Landscape. Mother and Baby. Something in the Air'. In the second, 'Chameleon Love Call', the theme is hidden in arabesque keyboard patterning. In the third, 'Chameleon in Paris', the lounge lizard slips into a melancholy waltz, but he apparently enjoys a quick meal at the end of this trip, too.

Violinist and composer **Birgitte Alsted** is known for incorporating extra-musical and theatrical elements into her scores. She provides specific instructions for the performance of her three etudes titled *Skildpadden drømmer ... hvad?* (The turtle dreams ... what?). Like Frandsen, Alsted writes three versions of the same music, increasing in tech-

nical difficulty. The pianist is asked to 'crawl onto the stage, sit down, sink a little, more and more, falling asleep...?' before waiting five seconds at the end of the piece before crawling off again. The music itself creeps slowly, but remains purposeful and circumspect. In each etude, the turtle is more prone to awaken suddenly with a spurt of energy – apparently enough for him to climb a mountain in the third.

Hollywood-born composer **Andy Pape**, now a naturalized Dane, brings his own brand of ironic wit to *Loxodóntula* (Little elephant), three studies in tone colour and rhythmic precision. The trudging rhythmic pattern and the melody above it are both developed in parallel in the three etudes, in which the little-big creature appears to mature in physical ability and mental fantasy. The baby elephant grows into its body and mind, learning what it can do.

The crystalline lucidity that so frequently marks out **Karsten Fundal's** music of varying styles is a central feature of his depiction of the migrating bird. Uniting all three etudes is a strophic song of four lines, used once more as a subject for variation. First the bird's song is spelt out with an accompaniment in counterpoint, like a valedictory bar room ballad. In the second etude, where the pianist must master hand crossing, we hear the song laden with the extra sadness of murky chords. Finally the song spreads its quasi-improvisatory wings with blossoming figurations that take flight in the third etude.

The Iranian composer **Amir Mayhar Tafreshipour**, who was a student in Esbjerg before continuing his studies in London, writes music that aspires to 'reach around continents'. His choice of animal, the Persian cheetah, reflects his heritage. The first etude, 'En lille gepard er født'

(A small cheetah is born), is a lullaby built of hesitant quadruped steps. In the next, the cheetah experiences its first hunt while the third advances both musical technique and narrative, taking a step back to reflect on this endangered species' fraught interaction with humanity and the very real prospect of extinction.

In keeping with his reputation for combining fantasy and logic, **Mogens Christensen** finds an inspired solution for the focused depiction of a hopping flea: the pianist uses only thumbs. In 'Hoppe-lippe' (Jumping flea), the thumbs act mostly in exchange, hocketing the melody between themselves. 'Loppetjans' (Flea job), the second etude, increases the skill required considerably by having the thumbs play together in parallel. In the third, 'Loppedans' (Flea dance), the idea of exchange between the two thumbs returns, but now all the faster.

The jazz pianist and composer **Erik Ørum von Spreckelsen** sits with Christina Bjørkøe on the faculty of the Danish National Academy of Music. His subject is the sand-erling, the arctic breeding wading bird. The score for his first etude is semi-improvised, setting up a basic motivic backdrop from which the pianist is instructed to 'make your own small melodic statements in and out of the basic motif'. The more rhapsodic second etude is fully spelt-out but its rhapsodic style feels similarly improvisatory, its motif emerging in the right hand from the swirling patterns of the left. The third etude glides, dips and soars, the bird drunk on its own freedom.

*Andrew Mellor is a journalist and critic with a particular interest in the culture and music of Denmark and the Nordic countries*

The pianist **Christina Bjørkøe** is one of Denmark's leading musicians. She performs solo, as a chamber musician and as a soloist with the Danish symphony orchestras. She is also an associate professor at the Danish National Academy of Music. Christina Bjørkøe trained privately with Therese Koppel then spent two years at the Juilliard School of Music, New York. She made her debut from the soloist class at the Royal Danish Academy of Music, Copenhagen in 1997. She has also worked with well known pianists including Krystian Zimerman and Emanuel Ax. She has performed throughout the Nordic countries and Germany, France, Poland, the Czech Republic, Italy, Croatia, China, South America and the United States. She has given notable concerts, including works by Beethoven, Chopin and Schubert, in Copenhagen's Tivoli Concert Hall. Among the numerous

awards Christina Bjørkøe has received are the Victor Borges Award, the Carl Nielsen Travel Scholarship and the Gladsaxe Music Prize. In 2005 she won the DR P2 Music Award for her recording of Knudåge Riisager's piano works. She received the same award in 2009 for her complete recording of Carl Nielsen's piano works. Her other CDs feature solo and chamber works by Herman D. Koppel, Niels Viggo Bentzon and most recently two CDs with Fini Henriques' music, one recorded with the Danish National Symphony Orchestra's concertmaster, Johannes Søe Hansen.

## Zoo-etuder

Af Andrew Mellor

Hvad kan være årsagen til, at etuden har vist sig så holdbar som musikalsk genre? Måske skyldes det den uimodståelige udfordring, der for komponister kan ligge i at finde kunstnerisk gode løsninger på tekniske udfordringer. Etudens historie kan ses som en lang, langsom dans mellem disse to forhold. Genren begyndte som et simpelt "studium", som navnet fortæller ('étude' er fransk for 'øvelse'), hvor mange klaverelever blev alt for godt bekendt med de tørre tekniske øvelser af Muzio Clementi og andre komponister. Chopin tillægges æren for at have nytænkt etuden som en teknisk øvelse med mulighed for – samtidig – at udforske de helt store følelser. Men Bach havde tidligere

bestemt været der og skrevet hele samlinger af værker, der er etuder af alt andet end navn.

Etuden trives også i vore dages Danmark, hvor komponisterne traditionelt har værdsat udfordringerne i at skrive musik inden for stramme rammer og længe holdt af at udvide deres kreativitet ved at underlægge den systemer, rækker eller aske-tiske strukturer. Processen har affødt musik, som på samme tid er ekstremt fokuseret og i besiddelse af en særlig fantasi, klarhed og styrke.

Den samling på 12 etuder, som *Animal Universe* består af, fører tanken et skridt videre ved at anvende et overordnet udtryksmæssigt princip. Hvordan tilføres et teknisk fokuseret musikstykke til pædagogisk brug en dimension af både udtryksfuldhed og umiddelbar leg? Det gør det ved at bestille etuder forbundet med bestemte dyr. Det er en inspireret

idé med rødder langt tilbage i musikhistorien.

"Jeg har altid drømt om at bestille nye klaverværker hos danske komponister," skriver pianisten og klaverpædagogen Christina Bjørkøe i forordet til den samling på 12 etuder, hun i slutningen af 2010'erne bestilte hos lige så mange komponister. "Pludselig opstod tanken om at bestille en cyklus af klavretuder med dyr som gennemgående tema." Værkerne var blandt andet tiltænkt hendes klaverelever på Syddansk Musikkonservatorium i Odense.

Hver af etuderne er opbygget i tre satser ud fra et af Bjørkøe fastlagt formskema: en "koncertetude" kombineret med, hvad hun kalder to "yngre søskende – en lettere etude til elever på mellemniveau og en helt enkel etude for begyndere". Bjørkøes kollega på konservatoriet Mogens Christensen var hendes

første sparringspartner i projektet og som komponist også bidrager til det. "Ved at forbinde etuderne med et dyr fik de også et stærkere poetisk indhold, som både børn og voksne har mulighed for at forholde sig til," skriver han i sit forord til samlingen. I samme ånd som andre etudesamlinger i musikhistorien gav det desuden mulighed for at knytte mere eller mindre forskelligartede værker af tolv forskellige komponister tættere sammen. Som resultat blev værket ifølge Christensen "langt mere sammenhængende, end vi havde turdet drømme om".

Døren til menageriet går op med den ydmyge og altædende grævling med de korte ben, som her vækkes til live af **Anders Koppel** – en af Danmarks store musikalske tusindkunstnere.

Dyrets luntende gang tæt på jorden høres i det dybe register i den første etude, en kort rejse i form af en lang kadence. Ånden fra blandt

andre Mozart og Gershwin suser gennem den anden etude, mens den tredje gradvis falder til ro efter en ragtime baseret på materiale fra den første.

**Anders Nordentofts** musik har altid været kendetegnet af en klar fortællelemåde og direkte måde at kommunikere på. Her lader han edderkoppen træde direkte frem. Først sniger den sig rundt i tretonegrupper, som med tiltagende energi antyder de tre stavelser i ordet “edd-er-kop”. Den anden etude viser edderkoppen i færd med at spinde sit net, mens den tredje viser spindleren som den stålsatte og altseende herre over hele sin frembringelse, mens musikken breder sig fra midten ud over hele klaviaturet.

Ud over at være en af dansk musiklivs grundpiller har **John Frandsen** også længe vist sig i stand til at håndtere store temaer og former og ofte fundet plads til det intime i

grandiose sammenhænge. Som for at præsentere en åbenlys metafor for denne karakteristik viser Frandsen os her det største dyr i det forhåndenværende lille karneval: flodhesten. Hans samling består ganske enkelt af tre udgaver af det samme stykke, hvor dyret travet gennem en “Allegro brutale” med stadig større krav til den udøendes evner og teknik.

**Peter Bruun** står med det ene ben i populærmusikken og det andet i kunstmusikken. Hans værker er blevet kaldt en slags kombination af ‘Ny enkelhed’ og amerikansk minimalisme. Begge stilarter genspejles i hans første etude-portræt af en frø, “Tænksom frø hopper”. I “Frø og forsigtig fugl” og “Frygtsom frø falder” bliver det samme harmoniske materiale – som ender i en tvetydig vekslen mellem dur og mol – gjort stadig mere udviklet og udtryksfuldt. Der optræder blå toner i den midterste etude og rapsodiske fagter i den sidste.

**Eva Noer Kondrups** billeder af en sæl glinser ligesom dyrets våde pels og bruger klaviaturet og pedalerne til at skabe et impressionistisk billede af den, langt væk og måske også mytologisk. Musikken opbygger en kombination af legesyge og eftertæksomhed med lang resonans lige fra begyndelsen. Men samlingen udvikler sig også. I den anden etude flyder små, stolte fanfarer sammen med de rullende bølger fra den første. Den tredje bevæger sig i retning af noget næsten håndgribeligt, før den fordamper.

**Anders Brødsgaard** har længe troet på den bedste musiks evne til at forene teknik og sanselighed og er dermed et oplagt valg til at skrive etuder. Til sin kamæleon inddrager han også en anden genre: musikkens egen århundredgamle og “kamæleonlignende” tradition for at tage et tema og iklæde det variationer. Temaet præsenteres i “A Day in the Life ...”

med en melodi med tre toner omkring D, E og F, ligesom firbenets tunge og den danske børnesang “Jeg har fanget mig en myg”. Tre variationer lader kamæleonen ændre sin ydre fremtræden, men beholde det indre tema. Måske hører vi dens tunge svirpe i det hurtige, opadgående glissando i den første variation, “Landscape. Mother and Baby. Something in the Air”. I den anden, “Chameleon Love Call”, er temaet skjult bag klaverets arabeskmønstre. I den tredje, “Chameleon in Paris”, flanerer kamæleonen sig over i retning af en melankolsk vals, men er tydeligvis også glad for en hurtig bid efter rejsen.

Violinsten og komponisten **Birgitte Alsted** er kendt for at inddrage ikke-musikalske og dramatiske elementer i sine partiturer. Hun stiller konkrete krav til opførelsen af sine tre etuder med titlen *Skildpadden drømmer ... hvad?* Ligesom Frandsen skriver Alsted tre versioner af den samme



musik med tiltagende tekniske krav. Pianisten anmodes om at “komme kravlende ind på scenen, sætte sig, synke en smule sammen, så gradvis mere og falde i søvn ...?” for efter stykket at vente fem sekunder og så kravle ud igen. Selve musikken sniger sig langsomt, men også målrettet og fordækt af sted. I alle tre etuder er skildpadden tilbøjelig til pludselig at vågne op med et udbrud af energi – hvad der i den tredje åbenbart er nok til at bestige et bjerg.

**Andy Pape**, født i Hollywood og dansk statsborger, udfolder sit karakteristiske vid i *Loxodóntula* (Lille elefant), tre etuder i klangfarver og rytmisk præcision. De traskende rytmiske mønstre og melodien ovenover udvikles parallelt i de tre etuder, hvor det store, lille dyr ser ud til at blive mere moden og bevidst om sine fysiske evner og sin fantasi. Elefantungen lærer sin krop og bevidsthed at kende og opdager sine egne muligheder.

Den krystallinske klarhed, der så ofte kendetegner **Karsten Fundals** musik i varierende genrer, kendetegner også hans beskrivelse af trækfuglen. De tre etuder er fælles om en strofisk sang på fire linjer, der derudover bruges som udgangspunkt for variationer. Først præsenteres fuglens sang med kontrapunktisk akkompagnement som en anden modfalden ballade på en bar. I den anden etude, hvor pianisten skal spille med hænderne krydset, hører vi sangen tilføjet de uklare akkorders særlige tristesse. Til sidst hører vi i den tredje etude sangen brede sine mere eller mindre improviserede vinger ud og gå i luften med sprudlende figurationer.

Den iranske komponist **Amir Mayhar Tafreshipour** har studeret i Esbjerg og senere i London og skriver musik med ambition om at “omslutte kontinenter”. Hans egen baggrund afspejles her i valget af den persiske

gepard. Den første etude, “En lille gepard er født”, er en vuggesang opbygget af tøvende skridt på fire poter. I den næste oplever geparden for første gang at jage, mens den tredje udvikler både musikalsk teknik og fortællemåde og træder et skridt tilbage for at fundere over den truede arts sparsomme samkvem med menneskene og dens meget realistiske udsigt til at blive udryddet.

I overensstemmelse med sit ry for at kombinere fantasi og logik har **Mogens Christensen** fundet en inspireret måde at afbilde en hoppende loppe på: Pianisten bruger udelukkende tommelfingrene. I “Hoppe-loppe” foregår et vekselspil mellem tommelfingrene, der behandler melodien som en slags indbyrdes hoppebold. Den anden etude, “Loppetjans”, lader tommelfingrene spille i paralleller og øger dermed de tekniske krav betydeligt. I den tredje, “Loppedans”, vender tanken om at

lade de to tommelfingre afveksle nu tilbage, blot endnu hurtigere.

Jazzpianisten og komponisten **Erik Ørum von Spreckelsen** er ligesom Christina Bjørkøe ansat ved Syddansk Musikkonservatorium. Hans dyr er sandløberen, den arktiske vadefugl. Partituret til hans første etude er delvis improviseret og skaber et bagtæppe af motiver, hvorfra pianisten får besked på at “komme med sine egne små melodiske erklæringer ud fra og ind i grundmotivet”. Den mere rapsodiske anden etude er eksakt noteret, men føles med sin rapsodiske stil lige så improviseret, når motivet viser sig i højre hånd gennem de hvirvlende mønstre i venstre. Den tredje etude glider, dykker og flyver højt op som en fugl, der beruser sig i sin egen frihed.

*Andrew Mellor er journalist og kritiker med særlig interesse for dansk og nordisk kultur og musik.*



Christina Bjørkø

Pianisten **Christina Bjørkø** er en af Danmarks førende musikere. Hun optræder både solo, som kammermusiker og som solist med de danske symfoniorkestre. Desuden er hun docent i klaverspil ved Syddansk Musikkonservatorium. Christina Bjørkø var først privatelev hos Therese Koppel og gik siden to år på Juilliard School of Music i New York. Hun debuterede fra solistklassen ved Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium i 1997 og har arbejdet med pianister som Krystian Zimerman og Emanuel Ax. Christina Bjørkø har efterhånden optrådt i hele Norden og i Tyskland, Frankrig, Polen, Tjekkiet, Italien, Kroatien, Kina, Sydamerika og USA. I Tivolis Koncertsal har hun givet markante koncerter med værker af Beethoven, Chopin og Schubert. Blandt de talrige priser, Christina Bjørkø har modtaget, er Victor Borges Legat, Carl Nielsens Rejselegat og Gladsaxe Musikpris.

I 2005 vandt hun DR P2 Prisen for sin indspilning af Knudåge Riisagers klaverværker. Samme pris modtog hun i 2009 for sin indspilning af Carl Nielsens samlede klaverværker. Blandt Christina Bjørkøes øvrige CD'er findes solomusik og kammerværker af Herman D. Koppel, Niels Viggo Bentzon og senest to CD'er med musik af Fini Henriques, den ene indspillet sammen med DR Symfoniorkestrets koncertmester, Johannes Søe Hansen.

## GRÆVLINGEN

Af Niels Hav

Grævlingen er det klogeste  
af alle rovdyr, den holder sig væk  
fra symposiet. Uden had eller hævnthirst  
gik den sin vej for at sove.

Hele vinteren i sin grav,  
foret med tørt græs og mos –  
en lydhør søvn. I klare frostnætter  
lytter den til ambulancerne på motorvejen.

Og lovpriser sin egen intelligens: Hvem  
ved mere om metafysikken end jeg,  
der foretrækker månen frem for solen?  
Dagslyset gør jo alle sindssyge!

I mildt vejr foretager den en udflugt;  
roder i det rådne løv efter snegle og biller,  
grynter lysteligt. Så lunter den tilbage  
til sin grav, ned under jorden til de døde.

Hvor enhver er velkommen – også du,  
med åben natradio og pedalen i bund.  
Skynd dig!  
Om lidt holder ambulancerne i kø her.

© Niels Hav

## THE BADGER

By Niels Hav

The badger is the smartest of all predators,  
it stays away from the symposium.  
Without malice or feeling vengeful  
it went away to sleep.

Throughout the winter in its burrow  
lined with dried grass and moss –  
an attentive sleep. On clear frosty nights  
it hears the ambulances on the freeway.

And sings praises to its own intelligence, who  
knows more about metaphysics than I,  
preferring the moon to the sun?  
Daylight drives everyone mad!

In mild weather it goes for an outing;  
roots about in rotten leaves for snails and beetles  
grunts joyfully. Then it trots back to its burrow,  
down into the ground with all the dead.

Where everyone is welcome – even you  
with your night radio blaring and the pedal  
to the metal. Hurry up!  
Soon ambulances will be lined up here.

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English translation by Per K. Brask

DDD

Recorded at Danish National Academy of Music, Odense, on 2-4 august 2019

Recording producer: Viggo Mangor

Sound engineer: Viggo Mangor

Editing, mix and mastering: Viggo Mangor

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Zoo-etudes, by Andrew Mellor, translated from the English by Jakob Levinsen

Proofreaders: Jens Fink-Jensen, Colin Roth

Photo p. 18 © Thorbjørn Fessel

Artwork: Studio Tobias Røder, [www.tobiasroeder.com](http://www.tobiasroeder.com)

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All works published by Edition Wilhelm Hansen, [www.wisemusicclassical.com](http://www.wisemusicclassical.com)

All works were written with support from the Danish Arts Foundation

Dacapo Records acknowledge, with gratitude, the support of Augustinus Fonden and Solistforeningen af 1921

This release has been made in cooperation with the Danish National Academy of Music, Odense



**DACAPO**

8.224733

Dacapo Records is supported by the Danish Arts Foundation

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