

Jónas
Ásgeir
Ásgeirsson

Fikta

Finnur Karlsson (b. 1988)
Atli Ingólfsson (b. 1962)
Atli Heimir Sveinsson (1938–2019)
Þorkell Sigurbjörnsson (1938–2013)
Friðrik Margrétar-Guðmundsson (b. 1993)

Fikta

Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson, accordion

Þórgunnur Anna Örnólfsdóttir, vocalist⁹
Katerina Anagnostidou, percussion¹⁰
Mikkel Schou, electric guitar¹⁰

Elja Ensemble¹⁻⁷
Conducted by Bjarni Frímann Bjarnason

Finnur Karlsson	
Accordion Concerto (2020)	15:12
1 A Dream about Flying	2:39
2 <i>one and a</i>	1:00
3 Thread / Longed for	4:14
4 <i>two and a</i>	0:40
5 Bontempi's Ghost	2:19
6 <i>three and a</i>	1:12
7 Et Cetera	3:07
Atli Ingólfsson	
8 Radioflakes (2004)	9:11
Atli Heimir Sveinsson	
9 Lieder und Intermezzi (1996)	11:38
Text by Osip Mandelstam	
Þorkell Sigurbjörnsson	
10 Mobilissima visione (1972)	9:31
Friðrik Margrétar-Guðmundsson	
11 Fikta (2018)	7:38

Total 53:12

World premiere recording

A Love Affair

By Árni Heimir Ingólfsson

The accordion was one of the first instruments to become common in Iceland in the nineteenth century. It was first heard at dance entertainments in Reykjavík, then only a small village, shortly before 1850. By the 1890s, accordions had become quite common throughout the country, mostly played by self-taught musicians who played by ear. For classical and contemporary music, however, the accordion took much longer to get established, and only in the late twentieth century did Icelandic composers begin writing music for the instrument. In recent years, Iceland has produced several outstanding accordionists, including Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson. This disc contains music by three generations of Icelandic composers, written between 1972

and 2020, including two works created especially for Ásgeirsson himself.

Finnur Karlsson (b. 1988) studied at the Iceland University of the Arts and the Royal Danish Academy of Music, and among his teachers were Hans Abrahamsen, Atli Ingólfsson, and Úlfar Ingi Haraldsson. His *Accordion Concerto* was written for Jónas Ásgeirsson and the Elja Chamber Orchestra, an ensemble made up of young Icelandic musicians. The work was one of many casualties of the COVID-19 pandemic; it was premiered in Iceland in summer 2020 at what should have been the first concert of an extended tour. Due to restrictions imposed at short notice, the rest of the tour had to be cancelled, as were two further performances and a subsequent recording session. The recording heard here could finally take place nearly two years later. The work won the Icelandic Music Award for Composition of the Year in 2021.



Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson

The Accordion Concerto is in seven short movements, of which the odd-numbered ones are more substantial. Here Karlsson employs material derived from various sources, often unexpected. The first movement (*'A Dream about Flying'*) ingeniously quotes two melodies that are well-known in Iceland, although here they have been slowed down and distorted to the point of being virtually unrecognizable: *Flugvélar* (Aeroplanes), by the Icelandic pop group Nýdönsk, and *Grandmother's Flying Song* from the Norwegian Thorbjørn Egner's classic children's play *In the Forest of Huckybucky* (Dyrene i Hakkebakkeskogen). The third movement (*'Thread/Longed for'*) is largely based on a hexatonic scale; the fifth movement (*'Bontempi's Ghost'*) was inspired by Karlsson's experiments with the record function of his young daughter's Bontempi toy keyboard. Karlsson recorded a cluster, pressing as many keys as possible, then pressed 'Play'—at

which point the instrument rendered it as a sequence of pitches. The concerto's even-numbered movements are shorter, intermezzo-like, and bear similar titles: *one and a*, *two and a*, and *three and a*. These are all derived from a small, bouncy song that Karlsson wrote as a nod to the accordion's roots in folk music. The final movement, *Et Cetera*, is also a fragmentation of this song.

Atli Ingólfsson (b. 1962) studied with Davide Anzaghi in Milan and Gérard Grisey in Paris, and is among the leading Icelandic composers of his generation. His works are characterized by a highly inventive approach to sound, often influenced by spectral techniques and resulting in brilliant, colourful musical structures. *Radioflakes* was written in 2004 for the Norwegian accordionist Frode Haltli, upon commission from Radio France. Ingólfsson explains the idea behind the piece thus: 'I can't help seeing the accordion as a forefather of the

portable radio, the so-called ghetto-blasters. This means that for me it impersonates a struggle between its characteristic rhythmical swing, more aggressive sound-energy and carefree radio-scanning. Writing this piece was as fascinating a trip as sitting in front of the radio as a child, playing with the scanning knob.' In the work's opening, Ingólfsson explores the difference between playing with and without vibrato, and he gradually expands elements of pitch, rhythm, and dynamics in a virtuosic exploration of the accordion's 'ghetto-blasters'- or 'radio'-like qualities. At the very end, the performer is instructed to improvise 'very irregular morse-like patterns'. Ásgeirsson takes this literally, spelling out the work's title, *Radioflakes*, in morse code:

... ..
.....

Two of Iceland's leading composers in the last decades of the twentieth century were born only a few months

apart: **Atli Heimir Sveinsson** (1938–2019) and **Porkell Sigurbjörnsson** (1938–2013). Both were prolific composers and also active as teachers, administrators, and public intellectuals, and left an indelible mark on the musical scene. During his younger years, Sveinsson was something of an *enfant terrible* on the Icelandic music scene. He attended the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Cologne, where he studied with Günter Raphael and Bernd Alois Zimmermann. He also attended the Darmstadt composition courses and took lessons with Karlheinz Stockhausen. If one can speak of a typical Sveinsson style, it is eclectic, inventive, atmospheric, and expressive. It can be stunningly beautiful, but also experimental and provocative, characterized by harsh contrasts. Sveinsson himself spoke of his wish to 'combine everything' in an all-encompassing pluralism, an improvisatory synthesis of east and west, old and new.

Little is known of the origins of Sveinsson's work, *Lieder und Intermezzi* for soprano and accordion. These settings of three texts by the Russian poet Osip Mandelstam (1891–1938), translated into German by Paul Celan, were composed in 1996 but no performance at that time can be documented. It seems as though Sveinsson was obeying an inner urge, and the work was only premiered in 2020 by the performers on this disc. The music shows Sveinsson's more abstract side, although towards the end the accordion plays a gentle melody supported by chords, which Sveinsson instructs should be played 'Quasi "Bossa Nova"' but very softly.

Porkell Sigurbjörnsson studied in the United States, first at Hamline University, then at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign under the tutelage of Kenneth Gaburo and Lejaren Hiller. Sigurbjörnsson's most famous work is the hymn setting *Heyr, himna smiður* (Hear, Heaven's Maker), which

has become popular among choirs around the world in recent years. Sigurbjörnsson's attitude towards composition was unpretentious and decidedly anti-Romantic. His works are, first and foremost, 'playing with notes'—the name of a seminar he taught at the Reykjavik School of Music for years, and which inspired an entire generation of younger composers. Sigurbjörnsson's typical gambit was to choose a few notes, a motive or a theme, and to play around with the material. Sigurbjörnsson was also an eminently practical composer who tailored many of his works to specific performers, often his friends.

This is also true of the work heard here, *Mobilissima visione* (1972). It was written for the Danish ensemble Trio Mobile, whose members were the legendary accordionist Mogens Ellegaard, guitarist Ingolf Olsen, and percussionist Bent Lyloff. The trio gave a concert in Iceland in January 1971, where they met Sigurbjörnsson as well as other cultural luminaries,

including the Nobel Prize-winning author Halldór Laxness. Sigurbjörnsson wrote his own work for the trio just over a year later, in spring 1972. The work's title is a play on words, a portmanteau combining the trio's name and the title of Paul Hindemith's 1938 ballet, *Nobilissima visione*.

The youngest composer on this disc is **Friðrik Margrétar-Guðmundsson** (b. 1993). After graduating from the Iceland University of the Arts in 2017, he has become known primarily for his music for the theatre, dance, and visual media. His first opera, *Ekkert er sorglegra en manneskjan* (Nothing is More Tragic than a Human Being), was premiered in 2020 and received two Icelandic Theatre Awards including Music of the Year.

Fikta was written for Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson in 2018, a year after Margrétar-Guðmundsson's graduation as a composer. The two are old school friends and Ásgeirsson finds it fitting that the first solo work composed

especially for him should be by someone who knows him so well. The composer explains that he was still 'digesting everything I had learned at school, but also excited to do something that was fully mine, and that I didn't have to worry about being graded on.' In Icelandic, the verb *fikta* means to 'toy with' or even to 'tamper with', but the work's title is also a nod to the medieval tradition of *musica ficta*, the adjustment of certain pitches that was largely left to the performers' discretion. Margrétar-Guðmundsson explains that he had been fascinated by medieval music during his studies, particularly the origins of polyphony and its development, leading to the major/minor system. 'Steps that may seem inevitable in hindsight must have caused much disagreement at the time; what was once forbidden is later allowed. But in Iceland things developed in a different way, the local performance of *tvisöngur* [an Icelandic tradition of singing in parallel fifths, lasting until the twentieth century]

survived all these changes and perhaps things are not as inevitable as one might think.' The main subject of *Fikta*, then, is the tension between the conservative and the avant-garde. Margrétar-Guðmundsson derives the work's musical content, rhythm, and form from the frequency ratio of the pure fifth (3:2). *Fikta* seems to be an inevitable progression from the initial open fifth towards the F major triad that sounds towards the end—but, as the composer reminds us, this may not be as inevitable as it seems.

Lieder und Intermezzi (1996)

Text by Osip Mandelstam

9 Keine Worte, keinerlei.

Nichts, das es zu lehren gilt.
Sie ist Tier und Dunkelheit,
sie, die Seele, gramgestillt.

Nicht nach Lehre steht ihr Sinn,
nicht das Wort ists, was sie sucht.
Jung durchschwimmt sie, ein Delphin,
Weltenschlucht um Weltenschlucht.

Der sterne einerlei:
ich haß es, lieb es nicht.
Ich grüß dich, Turm-und-Pfeil:
mein Traum, mein alter – dich!

Sei lauter Fäden, Stein,
Stein, sei das Spinnentier:
Geh, grab dich, nadelfein,
ins Leere über mir.

Der Flügelschlag, gewiß –
ich hör, ich fühle ihn.
Doch der Gedanke ist
lebendig, fliegt – wohin?

Die Bahn, die Frist ... Ich kehre,
wer weiß, zurück ins Hier.
Die Liebe: dort zu schwer,
und hier: die Angst vor ihr ...

Nein, nicht den Mond – ein Zifferblatt
seh ich dort leuchten. Was kann ich
dafür,
daß ich die Sterne milchig seh und matt?

Wie dünnelhaft war Batjuschkows
Bescheid!

„Wie spät ist es?“ so fragen sie ihn hier,
und die es wissen wollten, hörten:
„Ewigkeit“.

Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson is an Icelandic classical accordionist based in Copenhagen. He graduated with a post-graduate degree from the Royal Danish Academy of Music in September 2022. Ásgeirsson was among the prize winners of the Young Soloists competition hosted by the Iceland University of the Arts and the Iceland Symphony Orchestra and, as a result, played as a soloist with the orchestra. This made him the first Icelander to play an accordion concerto with that orchestra. Ásgeirsson has since performed as a soloist with orchestras on several occasions.

Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson likes to work closely with composers to expand the accordion literature, especially in his native Iceland, and to show other artists the instrument's potential. He has premiered pieces by numerous composers from the Nordic countries and further afield.

Ásgeirsson is a founding member of several established ensembles: The Icelandic accordion trio Ítrío,

with whom he concluded his post-graduate degree; EKKI MINNA, an accordion/cello duo with Andrew Power, who compose their own music alongside performing at international contemporary music festivals; and finally KIMI ensemble with Þórgunnur Anna Örnólfsdóttir and Katerina Anagnostidou, who are both present on this album. In 2022, KIMI released their first album *Bittersweet* with Dacapo Records, in collaboration with the composer Nikki Martin.

Þórgunnur Anna Örnólfsdóttir is an Icelandic singer based in Copenhagen. She performs in a wide range of styles from early to contemporary music but has found her niche in performing new music. She has premiered over a dozen pieces which comprise both operas by, for example, Mathias Vestergård, Finnur Karlsson, Nikki Martin, Helgi Rafn Ingvarsson, solo pieces, and chamber music composed for her trio, the KIMI ensemble.

Pórgunnur Anna Örnólfsdóttir is active in the progressive opera scene, having interpreted the roles of Ariodante (Händel) and Dido (Purcell). She has performed as a soloist with Danish Chamber Players, Århus Sinfonietta, Via Artis Konsort and Bang on a Can.

Mikkel Schou is a trained guitarist from the Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus and from the soloist class at the Royal Danish Conservatory of Music in Copenhagen. Experimental instrumental music often characterizes Schou's concert practice, which also explores the trans- and post-disciplinary. Schou is artistic director of K!ART Ensemble for New Music and Performance Art and co-director of MINU_festival_for_expanded_music. His curatorial practice can best be described as a conceptual process that stages individual projects as socially relevant works of art. Schou is the recipient of Léonie Sonning's talent award in 2021.

Katerina Anagnostidou is a Greek percussionist based in Copenhagen. As a soloist, she has competed in several international competitions, such as the ARD International Music Competition in Munich and the Yamaha Foundation's Europe Music Competition in Greece in 2012. In 2018, she gave the Danish premiere of Peter Klatzow's Marimba Concerto with the Aalborg Symphony Orchestra, and has also performed Danish premieres of Marcin Błazewicz's Marimba Concerto and *Komboj* by Xenakis, as well as premiering numerous other works.

Anagnostidou collaborates with various ensembles such as SCENATET, Via Artis Konsort, KIMI and Sistro Duo, specializing in contemporary music and early music and has performed in countries such as Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Greece, Italy, Estonia and Iceland.

Elja is an Icelandic chamber orchestra known for its lively and electric performances.

Its members grew up playing music together from a young age before pursuing further education abroad. They have since established themselves as some of the country's most active performers, conductors, and artists. Elja's goal is to give exciting and energetic performances that reach the audience on a personal level. The ensemble is dedicated to varied and innovative programming and seeks to engage, not just with traditional classical styles, but with a broad range of musical styles and genres. Elja is conducted by Bjarni Frímann Bjarnason.

Bjarni Frimann Bjarnason has been Music Director of the Icelandic Opera since 2018, following his debut there with Tosca in 2017, for which he received unanimous critical and public acclaim. He was conductor-in-residence with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra from 2018–2021 and has been the conductor of the chamber orchestra Elja in Reykjavík since its

founding in 2017. He has conducted a versatile repertoire with a colourful list of leading orchestras worldwide, such as The Hallé Orchestra, Georgian Philharmonic Orchestra, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Århus Sinfonietta, BIT20 Ensemble, Hollywood Bowl Orchestra and Sinfonietta de Lausanne.

He studied violin and composition in Reykjavík and completed his studies as a violist at the Iceland University of the Arts. In 2009, he won the Iceland Symphony Orchestra's Young Soloists competition and performed Bartók's Viola Concerto with the orchestra. He later studied conducting with Fred Buttkewitz at the Hanns Eisler Conservatory in Berlin.

En kærlighedshistorie

Af Árni Heimir Ingólfsson

Akkordeonet var et af de første instrumenter, der vandt udbredelse i Island i 1800-tallet. Kort før 1850 gjorde det sig bemærket til dansesammenkomster i Reykjavík, som på det tidspunkt kun var en landsby. I 1890'erne havde akkordeonerne bredt sig til hele landet og blev typisk betjent af selv lærte musikere, som spillede efter gehør. Inden for klassisk og nutidig musik har det imidlertid taget akkordeonet væsentligt længere tid at etablere sig, og først i slutningen af 1900-tallet begyndte islandske komponister at skrive for instrumentet. I de seneste år har Island udklækket flere fremragende akkordeonspillere, heriblandt Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson. Musikken på denne udgivelse er skrevet mellem 1972 og 2020 og repræsenterer tre

forskellige generationer af islandske komponister, heriblandt to værker skrevet direkte til Ásgeirsson.

Finnur Karlsson (f. 1988) er uddannet ved Islands Kunstakademi og Det Kongelige Danske Musikonservatorium med blandt andre Hans Abrahamsen, Atli Ingólfsson og Úlfar Ingi Haraldsson som lærere. Hans akkordeonkoncert er skrevet til Jónas Ásgeirsson og Elja Ensemble, der består af unge islandske musikere. Værket blev uropført i Island i sommeren 2020 – ved hvad der var tænkt som den første koncert på en omfattende turne – men blev et af de mange ofre for COVID-19-pandemien. Som følge af restriktioner indført med kort varsel blev det nødvendigt at aflyse resten af turnéen i lighed med yderligere to opførelser og en efterfølgende indspilning. Først næsten to år senere kunne den foreliggende optagelse langt om længe finde sted. Værket vandt Den Islandske Musikpris for 'Årets komposition' i 2021.

Akkordeonkoncerten er i syv korte satser, hvoraf de med ulige numre er de mest substantielle. Her anvender Karlsson materiale hentet fra flere forskellige og ofte uventede kilder. Første sats ('A Dream about Flying') citerer på sindrig vis to melodier som er velkendte i Island, omend de er blevet sat ned i tempo og forvrænget til noget nær ukendelighed: *Flugvélar* (Flyvemaskiner) med den islandske popgruppe Nýdönsk, og *Bedstemors flyvevis* fra Thorbjørn Egners klassiske børnestykke *Dyrene i Hakkebakkeskoven*. Tredje sats ('Thread / Longed for') er overvejende baseret på en hexatonisk skala, og femte sats ('Bontempi's Ghost') er inspireret af Karlssons eksperimenter med optagefunktionen på sin lille datters Bontempi-legetøjskeyboard. Karlsson optog en clusterakkord ved at trykke så mange tangenter ned som muligt og trykkede derefter *play* – hvilket fik instrumentet til at gengive akkorden som en sekvens af forskellige tonehøjder. Koncertens

satser med lige numre er kortere, har præg af intermezzi og titler derefter: 'one and a, two and a' og 'three and a'. De udspringer alle af en lille, kvik sang, som Karlsson skrev med akkordeonets folkemusikalske rødder i tankerne. Sidste sats, 'Et Cetera', er ligeledes et fragment af sangen.

Atli Ingólfsson (f. 1962) har studeret hos Davide Anzaghi i Milano og Gérard Grisey i Paris og regnes blandt de førende islandske komponister i sin generation. Hans værker kendetegnes af en yderst original tilgang til lyd, som ofte er påvirket af spektralteknikker og resulterer i virtuose og farverige musikalske strukturer. *Radioflakes* er skrevet i 2004 til den norske akkordeonspiller Frode Halti som bestillingsværk fra Radio France. Ingólfsson beskriver værkets idé således: "Jeg kan ikke lade være med at betragte akkordeonet som en forløber for den transportable radio, den såkaldte ghettooblaster. Dermed er det for mig også indbegrebet af en kamp

mellem dets karakteristiske rytmiske puls, en mere aggressiv klangenergi og ubekymret bevægelse frem og tilbage mellem radiokanalerne. Værkets tilblivelse var lige så fascinerende som at sidde foran radioen som barn og lege med kanalvælgeren.” I værkets indledning udforsker Ingólfsson forskellen på at spille med og uden vibrato og udvikler gradvis tonehøjder, rytmer og dynamik gennem en virtuos udforskning af akkordeonets ‘ghettoblaster’- eller radiolignende egenskaber. Til allersidst får musikeren besked på at improvisere “meget uregelmæssige, morselignende figurer”. Det tager Ásgeirsson helt bogstaveligt ved at morse værkets titel, *Radioflakes*, i morsealfabetet:

... ..
.....

To af Islands førende komponister fra de sidste årtier af 1900-tallet blev født med kun få måneders mellemrum:

Atli Heimir Sveinsson (1938-2019) og **Porkell Sigurbjörnsson** (1938-2013).

Ud over at være produktive som komponister satte de sig også begge, i kraft af at være aktive som lærere, administratorer og kulturpersonligheder, uudslettelige spor i musiklivet. I sine yngre dage havde Sveinsson status af lidt af en *enfant terrible* i islandsk musikliv. Han studerede på Staatliche Hochschule für Musik i Köln hos Günther Raphael og Bernd Alois Zimmermann. Ligeledes deltog han i kompositionskurserne i Darmstadt og modtog undervisning af Karlheinz Stockhausen. Hvis man kan tale om en karakteristisk stil hos Sveinsson, er den eklektisk, nyskabende, stemningsfuld og ekspressiv. Den kan være iørefaldende smuk, men også eksperimenterende, provokerende og kendetegnet af skarpe kontraster. Selv talte Sveinsson om gerne at ville “kombinere det hele” i en altomfattende pluralisme, en improvisatorisk syntese af øst og vest, af gammelt og nyt.

Man ved ikke meget om oprindelsen til Sveinssons værk *Lieder und*

Intermezzi for sopran og akkordeon. Musikken til tre digte af den russiske digter Osip Mandelstam (1891 - 1938) i tysk oversættelse af Paul Celan blev komponeret i 1996, men der er ikke dokumentation for, at de er blevet opført dengang. Sveinsson synes at have komponeret dem af ren og skær indre trang, og musikken blev først uropført i 2020 af de samme musikere som på denne plade. Musikken er et eksempel på Sveinssons mere abstrakte side, om end akkordeonet hen mod slutningen spiller en blid melodi med akkorder under, som ifølge Sveinssons angivelser skal spilles “Quasi ‘Bossa Nova’”, men meget stille.

Porkell Sigurbjörnsson blev uddannet i USA, først på Hamline University og derefter på University of Illinois i Urbana-Champaign under Kenneth Gabura og Lejaren Hiller. Sigurbjörnssons mest berømte værk er koralen *Heyr, himna smiður* (Lyt, himlenes skaber), som i de senere år er blevet populær blandt kor overalt i verden.

Sigurbjörnssons udgangspunkt som komponist var uprætentiøst og bevidst antiromantisk. Hans musik er først og fremmest “leg med toner” – titlen på et kursus, han i mange år holdt på musikkonservatoriet i Reykjavík, og som inspirerede en hel generation af yngre komponister. Sigurbjörnssons typiske fremgangsmåde var at vælge nogle få toner, et motiv eller et tema, og så lege med materialet. Sigurbjörnsson var også en yderst praktisk komponist, som skræddersyede mange af sine værker til bestemte musikere, ofte sine venner.

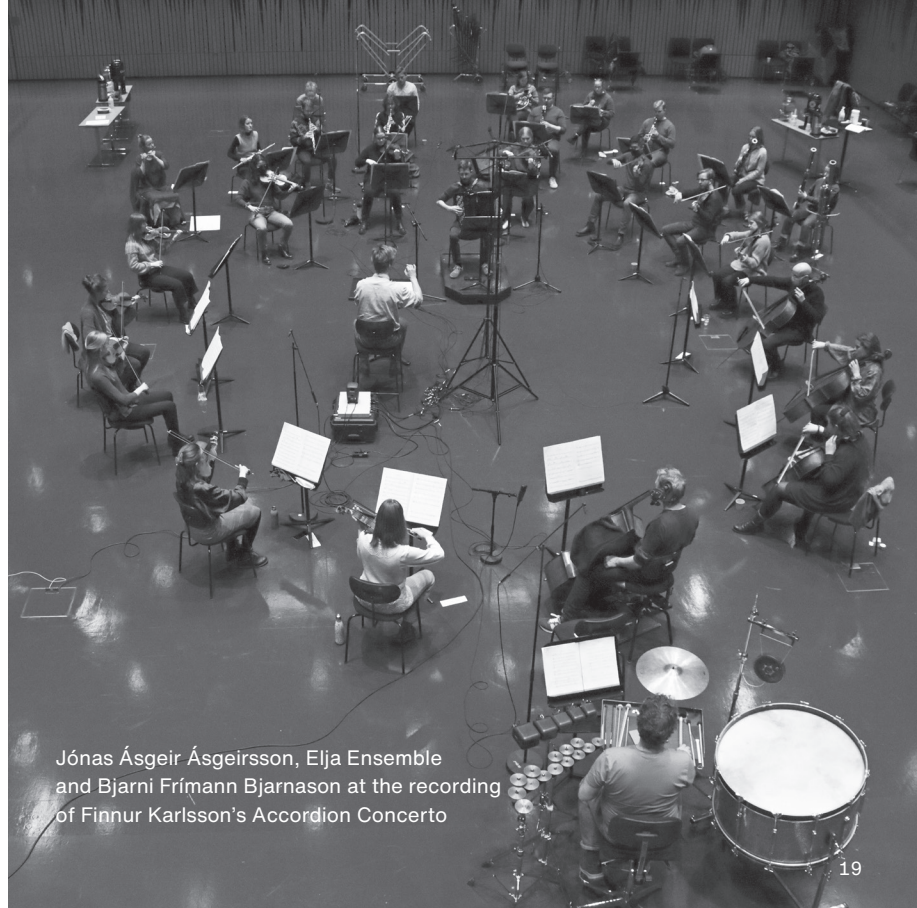
Det gælder også det foreliggende værk, *Mobilissima visione* (1972). Det blev skrevet til det danske ensemble Trio Mobile bestående af den legendariske akkordeonspiller Mogens Ellegaard, guitaristen Ingolf Olsen og slag-tøjsspilleren Bent Lylloff. I januar 1971 gav trio en koncert i Island, hvor de mødte Sigurbjörnsson og andre fremtrædende kulturpersonligheder, heriblandt den litterære Nobelpristager Halldór Laxness. Sigurbjörnsson

skrev sit værk til trioen i foråret 1972, altså lidt over et år senere. Titlen er et ordspil, en sammentrækning af trioens navn og titlen på Paul Hindemiths ballet *Nobilissima visione* fra 1938.

Den yngste komponist på denne udgivelse er **Friðrik Margrétar-Guðmundsson** (f. 1993). Han aflagde eksamen ved Islands Kunstakademi i 2017 og er siden primært blevet kendt for musik til teater, dans og visuelle medier. Hans første opera, *Ekkert er sorgleggra en manneskjan* (Intet er sørgeligere end et menneske), har modtaget to priser ved den islandske teaterpris, Gríman, blandt andet for 'Årets musik'.

Fikta er skrevet til Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson i 2018, året efter Margrétar-Guðmundssons komponisteksamen. De er gamle studiekammerater, og Ásgeirsson finder det kun passende, at det første soloværk, som er komponeret direkte til ham, er skrevet af en med så nært et kendskab til ham. Komponisten forklarer, at han

stadig var i gang med at "fordøje alt det, jeg havde lært på studiet, men også begejstret over at kunne lave noget, der var helt igennem mit eget, og hvor jeg ikke behøvede at tænke på at skulle have karakter". På islandsk betyder verbet *fikta* at "lege med" eller ligefrem "fuske med", men værkets titel er også en hentydning til middelalderbegrebet *musica ficta*, hvor visse tonehøjder i vidt omfang overlades til musikernes forgodtbefindende. Margrétar-Guðmundsson forklarer, at han i sin studietid var blevet fascineret af middelalderens musik, i særdeleshed polyfoniens opståen og udvikling frem mod dur-mol-systemet. "Selvom det i tilbageblik kan ligne en uundgåelig udvikling, må det i datiden have vakt stor uenighed, at det førhen forbudte bliver tilladt. Men i Island udviklede tingene sig anderledes; den lokale *tvisöngur* (en islandsk tradition for at synge i parallelle kvinter, som fortsatte frem til 1900-tallet) overlevede alle disse forandringer, og måske er tingene ikke nær så uundgåelige som ved første



Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson, Elja Ensemble and Bjarni Frímánn Bjarnason at the recording of Finnur Karlsson's *Accordion Concerto*

øjekast.” Hovedemnet for *Fikta* er således spændingen mellem konservatisme og avantgarde. Margrétar-Guðmundsson henter værkets musikalske indhold, rytme og form fra frekvensforholdet i den rene kvint (3:2). *Fikta* er tilsyneladende en uundgåelig udvikling fra den indledende tomme kvint frem mod den F-dur-akkord, man hører til sidst. Men som komponisten minder os om, er den måske alligevel ikke helt så uundgåelig, som den forekommer.

Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson er en klassisk uddannet akkordeonspiller med base i København. Han er prisvinder ved Unge Solister-konkurrencen, arrangeret af Islands Kunstakademi og Islands Symfoniorkester, og optrådte som følge deraf som solist med orkestret. Dette gjorde ham til den første islænding til at opføre en akkordeonkoncert med landets nationale symfoniorkester. Ásgeirsson har siden optrådt som orkester-

solist ved flere lejligheder. Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson lægger vægt på tætte samarbejder med nulevende komponister med målet om at gøre akkordeon-litteraturen rigere og lade andre kunstnere få øje på instrumentets potentiale. Han har uropført værker af talrige komponister fra Norden og andre lande. Foruden at være en virtuos solist er Ásgeirsson stiftende medlem af flere ensembler: Den islandske akkordeontrio Ítrío, der debuterede fra Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium i København i september 2022, og EKKI MINNA, en akkordeon/cello-duo med Andrew Power, hvor de komponerer musik og optræder på internationale ny musik-festivaler og modtaget ekstraordinært gode anmeldelser. Han har desuden grundlagt ensemblet KIMI, hvor han optræder med Þórgunnur Anna Örnólfsdóttir og Katerina Anagnostidou, der begge er med på dette album. I 2022 udgav KIMI deres første album, *Bittersweet*, på Dacapo Records med musik af Nikki Martin.

Þórgunnur Anna Örnólfsdóttir er en islandsk sanger med base i København. Hendes repertoire spænder bredt – fra tidlig til moderne musik – men hun har især specialiseret sig i ny musik. Örnólfsdóttir har uropført over en halv snes værker, også operaer, af eksempelvis Mathias Vestergård, Finnur Karlsson, Nikki Martin, Helgi Rafn Ingvarsson og solostykker og kammermusik komponeret til KIMI-ensemblet. Þórgunnur Anna Örnólfsdóttir er aktiv på den progressive operascene i Danmark og har i den forbindelse blandt andet fortolket Händels Ariodante og Purcells Dido. Hun har optrådt som solist med Ensemble Storstrøm, Århus Sinfonietta, Via Artis Konsort og Bang on a Can.

Mikkel Schou er uddannet guitarist fra Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium og fra solistklassen på Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium. Eksperimenterende instrumentalmusik kendetegner ofte Schous koncertpraksis, der også udforsker det trans- og

post-disciplinære. Han er kunstnerisk leder af K!ART Ensemble for New Music and Performance Art og en del af ledelsen af MINU_festival_for_expanded_music. Hans praksis som kurator kan bedst beskrives som en konceptuel proces, der iscenesætter individuelle projekter som samfundsrelevante kunstværker. Han modtog Léonie Sonnings Talentpris i 2021.

Katerina Anagnostidou er en græsk percussionist med base i København. Som solist har hun deltaget i flere internationale konkurrencer, blandt andre ARD International Music Competition i München og Yamaha Foundations europæiske musikkonkurrence i Grækenland i 2012. I 2018 var hun solist i den danske uropførelse af Peter Klatzows marimbakoncert med Aalborg Symfoniorkester. Anagnostidou har desuden stået bag en række danske uropførelser, for eksempel af Marcin Błażewicz's marimbakoncert og Xenakis' *Komboi*. Katerina Anagnostidou har speciale i

ny musik og tidlig musik og optræder med ensembler som SCENATET, Via Artis Konsort, KIMI og Sistro Duo. Hun har optrådt i blandt andet Tyskland, Danmark, Sverige, Grækenland, Italien, Estland og Island.

Elja er et islandsk kammerorkester, der er kendt for sine levende, elektriske ladet koncerter. Orkestermedlemmerne kender hinanden fra barnsben, og mange har studeret sammen og fortsat deres musikuddannelse i udlandet. I dag har medlemmerne etableret sig som nogle af Islands mest aktive performere, dirigenter og kunstnere. Eljas mål er at give interessante, slagkraftige koncerter, der når publikum på et personligt plan. Ensemblet er dedikeret til en varieret og innovativ programlægning og søger at engagere sig – ikke kun i de traditionelle klassiske stilarter, men i en bred vifte af musikalske stilarter og genrer. Bjarni Frímann Bjarnason er Eljas faste dirigent.

Bjarni Frímann Bjarnason har været musikchef for Den Islandske Opera siden 2018, efter han debuterede med *Tosca* i 2017, en opsætning som han modtog stor ros for. Han var hustrigent hos Islands Symfoniorkester fra 2018-2021 og har været dirigent for kammerorkestret Elja i Reykjavík, siden grundlæggelsen i 2017. Han har dirigeret et alsidigt repertoire med en farverig liste af førende orkestre verden over, eksempelvis Hallé Orkestret, Georgian Philharmonic Orchestra, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Århus Sinfonietta, BIT20 Ensemble, Hollywood Bowl Orchestra og Sinfonietta de Lausanne.

Bjarnason studerede violin og komposition i Reykjavík og afsluttede sine violinstudier ved Islands Kunstakademi. I 2009 vandt han den islandske Unge Solister-konkurrence, hvor han optrådte med Bartóks bratsch-koncert. Senere studerede Bjarnason direktion hos Fred Buttkewitz på Hanns Eisler Konservatoriet i Berlin.

DDD

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Recording producer: Ragnheiður Jónsdóttir
Engineering, editing, mix and mastering: Ragnheiður Jónsdóttir

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MUSIKANTOLOGI

Dacapo Records, Denmark's national record label, was founded in 1989 with the purpose of releasing the best of Danish music past and present. The majority of our recordings are world premieres, and we are dedicated to producing music of the highest international standards.

Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson, accordion

Þórgunnur Anna Örnólfsdóttir, vocalist

Katerina Anagnostidou, percussion

Mikkel Schou, electric guitar

Elja Ensemble

Conducted by Bjarni Frímann Bjarnason

World premiere recording

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