



Britta Byström Letter in April

Athelas Sinfonietta

Britta Byström (b. 1977)

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Anne Ngoc Søe, violin<sup>1,2,3-8</sup>  
Maria Isabel Edlund, cello<sup>1,3-8,9</sup>

Idinna Lützhøft, violin<sup>3-8</sup>  
Mina Fred, viola<sup>3-8</sup>  
Pascal Armini, viola  
Lea Brøndal, cello  
Astor Cortabarría, double bass  
Hélène Navasse, flute  
Liza Gibbs Fox, oboe  
Anna Klett, clarinet<sup>1</sup>  
Signe Haugland, bassoon

Thorbjørn B. Gram, horn  
Laszlo Mólnár, trumpet  
Andras Olsen, trombone  
Manuel Esperilla, piano<sup>1</sup>  
Rikke Sandberg, piano  
Maria Boelskov Sørensen, harp  
Mads Hebsgaard Andersen, percussion  
  
Eirik Haukaas Ødegaard, conductor<sup>9</sup>

1 **Letter in April** (2011) 12:29  
*For clarinet, violin, cello and piano*

2 **Baum in der Stadt** (2014) 7:49  
*For violin solo*

**Images From the Floating World** (2019) 15:09  
*For string quartet*

3 I Con moto 1:50

4 II Ritmico 2:04

5 III Leggiero 2:33

6 IV Grazioso 2:42

7 V Energico 2:38

8 VI Con moto 3:23

9 **Figures at the Seaside** (2020) 23:39  
*For cello and chamber orchestra*

Total 59:08

World premiere recording



Danish Arts  
Foundation

## Root and Branch

By Andrew Mellor

Britta Byström was raised on Sweden's east coast. As a child she played the trumpet but was soon drawn to writing music, lured into the universe of ensemble sound by her local orchestra. At 18, she became a student at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, graduating six years later with the orchestral work *Sera* (2002).

That piece adumbrated key elements of Byström's style: music in which a stern playfulness often induces circular weaving melodies apparently born from within. It also established the composer's interest in high tessituras and textural luminosity. Soon Byström was demonstrating a minimalistic tendency to spin out entire works from a single entity – a theme, a shape or a chord. The

technique proved both liberating and concentrating.

Byström is as open to inspiration as she is aware of the power it wields. She has written operas, orchestral and vocal works and reflected on big existential themes from psychological disorientation to climate change and the challenges faced by the Sámi population of the Nordic region's far north. Her music is created without compromise or cushioning. Its sparse elegance has seen it compared to that of a Japanese garden.

### Letter in April (2011)

In 2010, Byström received a commission from the Katrina Culture Association, which exists to support professional music on Åland – an autonomous, Swedish-speaking archipelago officially part of Finland. The work commissioned by the Association would eventually be performed, in 2011, as part of a concert series in Stockholm titled *Resounding Letters*.

Britta Byström



That title put Byström in mind of the Danish poet Inger Christensen – specifically, her 1979 collection *Letter in April*. The collection itself was strongly influenced by the music of the French composer Olivier Messiaen and took Christensen’s lyrical verbal style even closer to the themes of love, loss and loss of self that were already present in her work. ‘The collection is a kind of impressionistic scrapbook with spring motifs,’ Byström writes of Christensen’s *Letter in April* in her own programme note. ‘To some extent, my music can be characterized in the same way: a series of different events that suggest the coming of spring.’

Byström’s letter spools out from the circling motif that quickly takes root high up on the piano keyboard. This motif is danced around, ruminated upon, and toyed with – sometimes with cascading momentum and sometimes with an airy unhurriedness. The clarinet, violin and cello of the ensemble form what the composer

describes as a ‘singing trio’ while the piano is set apart – light-footed, often contributing from high up and low down, sometimes two octaves apart: a seasoning to the general conversation. Beneath the surface, a slow transformation occurs, charting a journey from turbulence to calm by almost imperceptible degrees. ‘Is it the exuberant spring of life that turns into endless summer?’ asks the composer.

#### **Baum in der Stadt (2014)**

In 2014, Byström occupied herself with a series of pieces for solo stringed instruments. As much as these scores trained the techniques of the musicians who played them, they also served as ‘études’ or study pieces for Byström’s own technique – means of sharpening her understanding of the instrument in question, and of its compositional history in the hands of her predecessors.

*Baum in der Stadt* was written that year for solo violin. Its title, literally ‘Tree in the City’, was influ-

enced by names given to his own paintings by the Swiss-born German artist Paul Klee, whose combination of expressionism, cubism, and a deep sensitivity to colour blurred the boundaries between art and design. In parallel, Byström’s thought process started from architectural foundations, as she ‘combined certain building blocks’ before the work in question began to take on a life of its own. ‘The city is the construction,’ she said in an interview about the piece, ‘and out of it grows something with its own roots and its own life cycle – the tree.’

Like *Letter in April*, *Baum in der Stadt* is rooted by a clear motif (or ‘building block’) heard right at the start: the piece’s first five notes, which travel up to a peak on the third note and down again, and which consistently fuel the music’s vitality thereafter. The music appears to search for the stability of the ‘open fifth’ interval, combining plucked and bowed sounds even at the same time. A plucked passage induces a notably

rhythmic variant on the motif and eventually, a more obsessively driven focus on the motif drives the work home to its six concluding low A’s.

*Baum in der Stadt* was given new life in 2020 when it won the solo category at the so-called Swedish Chamber Games, in which scores written in the country are singled out for exposure abroad. Soon after that, it was performed by Anne Ngoc Søe of Athelas Sinfonietta – a week before the ensemble premiered Byström’s cello concerto *Figures at the Seaside*.

#### **Images From the Floating World (2019)**

Perhaps the greatest of the Icelandic sagas is that known as *Njal’s Saga* – the sorry tale of Njal Thorgeirsson of Bergthorsknohl. It tells of an escalating feud between Icelandic settlers, culminating in the torching of Njal’s home with he and his family inside it. The sole survivor, Njal’s nephew Kari, swears vengeance on his uncle’s death, but is persuaded to engage in an epic trial after which the torch-

ers of Njal's home are sent into exile. Central themes are perseverance, justice, conflict, and fortitude.

In 2019, the cellist Maria Isabel Edlund co-created the scenic concert *SEGJA*, in conjunction with Aarhus Unge Tonekunstnere (AUT), where one composer each from Iceland, Finland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden was commissioned to write a reflection on the saga for the ensemble Taïga – at that time a group consisting of four string players. The results were presented at the disused railway depot Godsbanen in Aarhus in September 2019.

Byström's quartet, titled *Images From the Floating World*, comprises six short movements each with a musically instructive title. *Con moto* ('With movement') derives its momentum from oscillating movement. A swing takes root in *Ritmico* ('Rhythmically') as a melody emerges and is passed around the instruments as the textural layers build. *Leggiero* ('Lightly') has some qualities of an Icelandic folk

song (a 'tvísöngur'), as a plain lyrical theme is induced by gentle rhythmic displacement, running eventually into harmonic strain.

*Grazioso* ('Gracefully') is characterized by a ghostly, wave-like figure using string harmonics, first heard on a viola but eventually sucking in all four instruments. *Energico* ('Energetically') generates its energy from the miniature particle accelerator of a series of repeated notes (a small echo of Carl Nielsen's Symphony No. 3), before galvanizing unisons and syncopations drive it forwards with an almost primeval force towards the deep breathing that shuts it down. In the final *Con moto* a simple tune emerges from a pizzicato figuration and is layered up in canon, leading the music steadily into a more complex conversation until it eventually grinds down to its conclusion.

#### **Figures at the Seaside (2020)**

Following the AUT project, Taïga's cellist Maria Isabel Edlund approached

Byström to write the cello concerto *Figures at the Seaside* for her graduation from the soloist's class of the Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus, in 2020. The first performance would have taken place in April that year but was wiped out by social restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. The score was eventually premiered by Edlund and Athelas Sinfonietta, the co-commissioner, at KoncertKirken in Copenhagen on 17 October 2021.

Byström had written concertos for stringed instruments before, but all had taken the traditional form of a soloist pitted against a large orchestra. This work would be different, combining the human-scaled voice of the cello with a small, versatile ensemble of single woodwinds, brass, strings, harp, percussion, and a prominent piano doubling vibraphone.

The composer worked closely with Edlund when writing the piece, taking as her starting point the cellist's playing style and her relation-

ship with the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. The work makes use of the Prelude No. 12 in F minor from the composer's *Well Tempered Clavier, Book II*, with Byström describing her score as 'a fantasy' with Bach's keyboard prelude as its 'starting point'.

The title is taken from a surrealist painting by Pablo Picasso depicting big, rotund bodies entwined on a yellow-sand beach. More than the actual painting, while working on the score Byström considered the idea of fragments of Bach's figurative music washing up onto a beach or shore (the 'figures' of the title), only to be picked up and pieced together. The structure of the single-movement work is akin to the 'promenade' through an art gallery heard in Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, in which the ensemble forms the 'transport route' into various picture or musical movements. This structural device inspired by Mussorgsky has been a longstanding feature of Byström's music: her catalogue

includes over 20 'walk' works that take the form of musical strolls that offer glimpses of landscapes, ideas, or the works of other composers.

Immediately, the listener is aware of cyclic patterns held in the air, the very sort familiar from the works already heard. The ingredients coalesce, and the music begins its journey through various states, one of the earliest being a *ritmico* section launched by the plucked solo cello (one of a few echoes of *Images From the Floating World*). That quickly induces a bowed cello tune of archetype Byström shape, before the cello appears more spiky and agitated in a *leggiero* section prefaced by piano and bright tuned percussion. After glassy harmonies in a *calmo* section, the piano appears to transmute into a vibraphone.

After alternating passages of repose and momentum, the ensemble begins to take a more active and expressionist role, with glitteringly bright salvos forming portals for the

soloist and percussionists steadily reaching for more timbrally cutting instruments. The cellist establishes an aerated dialogue with other strings for something like a cadenza, before circling brass begin to shroud it in a chorale-like idea derived from the Bach. As the solo cello wavers on its pitch horizon, a swanee whistle and high winds lend it support before its final ascent.

**Anne Ngoc Søe** is recognized as one of Denmark's most accomplished and dedicated musicians in contemporary music. She began playing the violin at the age of four, using the Suzuki method. At the age of fifteen, she won the Gold Medal at the Berlingske Music Competition for her performance of Paganini's Violin Concerto and represented Denmark at a Eurovision concert. That same year, she began her studies at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Milan Vitek's violin class. She later studied with Marta Líbalová



Anne Ngoc Søe

in Aarhus and with the renowned violinist Ruggiero Ricci in Salzburg.

Søe made her debut in 1991 and has a diverse repertoire as a soloist, with a particular interest in contemporary music. In recent years, she has premiered several notable violin concertos, including Morten Olsen's *The Heart of Darkness* in 2019, and Tyler Futrell's *Fresh Air* in 2020, both with the Athelas Sinfonietta. In 2020, her rendition of Karl Aage Rasmussen's violin concerto *Sinking Through the Dream Mirror* was released on the critically acclaimed album *Alone & Together* by Dacapo Records.

Anne Ngoc Søe is a member of the Copenhagen Phil and has been teaching at the Royal Danish Academy of Music since 2008. She serves as the concertmaster of the Athelas Sinfonietta and has recorded numerous albums with the ensemble.

**Maria Isabel Edlund** is a gifted Danish cellist who is 'fortunate enough to

collaborate with her favorite composers'. She is dedicated to forming close partnerships with composers to delve into the essence of their music and to explore the potential and boundaries of classical music. Her composer collaborations include Bára Gísladóttir, Britta Byström, Niels Rønsholdt, and Louise Alenius.

Maria Isabel Edlund holds a deep reverence for the cello, expressing it with respect, curiosity, and a love for the many nuances of the instrument.

In 2019, she co-created the scenic concert *SEGIA*, in conjunction with Aarhus Unge Tonekunstnere (AUT), which delved into the intersection of new chamber music, light, and design. Additionally, for several years, she has organized the festival *The House* in collaboration with violinist Cæcilie Balling, which pushes the boundaries of classical music and investigates the unique identity of a performance space through works written for and on the premises of a specific space.

Maria Isabel Edlund received her education at the Malmö Academy of Music and graduated from the soloist's class of the Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus, in 2020. She has been the recipient of the Aennchen and Eigil Harbys Fund, which has enabled her to pursue further studies and projects abroad. Edlund is a member of Athelas Sinfonietta and the ensemble Taïga. In the fall of 2022, her debut release, *Applause*, was unveiled, showcasing her deep passion for both new compositions and Baroque music.

**Athelas Sinfonietta** is one of Denmark's leading contemporary music ensembles. They perform in concerts and opera productions, festivals, and on international tours. Since its establishment in 1990, Athelas Sinfonietta has presented over 700 works, many of which were first performances. The ensemble has collaborated with notable soloists, conductors, and composers,

including Steve Reich, Per Nørgård, Heiner Goebbels, Poul Ruders, Arvo Pärt, David Lang, Christian Lindberg, Reinbert de Leeuw, Thomas Adès, Ilan Volkov, Paul Hillier, George Benjamin, Philippe Leroux, and Pierre-André Valade.

Athelas Sinfonietta places a strong emphasis on international collaboration, with recent appearances in countries such as England, Monaco, the United States, and France.

For Dacapo Records, Athelas Sinfonietta appears on a great number of albums featuring music by composers such as Niels Rosing-Schow, Karl Aage Rasmussen, Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen, Ole Buck, Rune Glerup, Per Nørgård, and Ib Nørholm. The sinfonietta is the ensemble-in-residence each year at KLANG – Copenhagen Avantgarde Music Festival.

## Rødder og grene

Af Andrew Mellor

Britta Byström er vokset op på den svenske østkyst. Som barn spillede hun trompet, men blev tidligt tiltrukket af at spille musik og gennem sit lokale orkester lokket ind i ensemblelydens univers. 18 år gammel blev hun optaget på Kungliga Musikhögskolan i Stockholm, hvorfra hun seks år senere debuterede med orkesterværket *Sera* (2002).

Dette værk indvarsler allerede centrale elementer i Byströms musikalske udtryk: En disciplineret lege-syge præsenterer ofte kredsende, bølgende melodier, der synes at være opstået indefra. Derudover åbenbarede værket også komponistens interesse for høje tonelejer og lysende klangflader. Byström udviklede hurtigt en minimalistisk tendens til at skabe hele værker ud fra et enkelt

element – et tema, en figur eller en akkord. Den teknik har vist sig at være både befriende og samlende.

Byström er lige så åben for inspiration, som hun er bevidst om den dermed forbundne magt. Hun har skrevet operaer, orkesterværker og vokalværker og forholdt sig til store, eksistentielle temaer fra psykisk sårbarhed til klimaforandringer og de særlige udfordringer for den samiske befolkning i de nordiske landes koldeste egne. Hendes musik er kompromisløs og på ingen måde behagesyg. Dens sarte elegance har fået den sammenlignet med en japansk have.

### Letter in April (2011)

I 2010 modtog Byström en bestilling fra Kulturföreningen Katrina, der har til formål at støtte det professionelle musikliv på Åland – den selvstyrende, svensktalende øgruppe under Finland. Det pågældende værk blev i 2011 opført som del af en koncertrække i Stockholm med titlen *Resounding Letters*.

Denne titel fik Byström til at tænke på den danske digter Inger Christensen – nærmere bestemt på samlingen *Brev i april* fra 1979. Samlingen er selv stærkt inspireret af den franske komponist Olivier Messiaen og førte Christensens poetiske sprogtoner endnu tættere på de temaer om kærlighed, tab og selvfortabelse, der allerede var til stede i hendes forfatterskab. "Samlingen er en slags impressionistisk scrapbog med forårsmotiver," skriver Byström om Christensens *Brev i april* i sin programnote. "Min musik kan i et vist omfang karakteriseres på samme måde: som en række forskellige begivenheder, der antyder forårets komme"

Byströms brev udvikler sig af et kredsende motiv, der hurtigt slår rod højt oppe på klaviaturet. Motivet bliver danset rundt med, overvejet og leget med – nogle gange med brusende energi og andre gange med luftig ro. Klarinetten, violinen og celloen udgør, hvad komponisten kalder en "syngende trio", mens klaveret spiller

for sig selv – letbenet, ofte både højt oppe og dybt nede, nogle gange med to oktavers mellemrum, som krydderi på den øvrige samtale. Under overfladen sker en langsom forvandling, der med næsten umærkelige midler beskriver en rejse fra turbulens til afklaring. "Er det livets frodige forår, der bliver til endeløs sommer?" spørger komponisten.

### Baum in der Stadt (2014)

I 2014 var Byström optaget af en række værker for solostrygere. Lige så meget som værkerne udviklede teknikken hos de involverede musikere, fungerede de også som 'etuder' eller øvelser for Byströms egen teknik – som midler til at skærpe hendes egen forståelse af det pågældende instrument og af dets historik i form af forgængeres måder at komponere for det på.

*Baum in der Stadt* er for solo-violin. Titlen, direkte oversat "Træ i byen", er påvirket af den schweizisk fødte tyske kunstner Paul Klees egne



værktitler. Klee, hvis kombination af ekspressionisme, kubisme og dybtliggende farvesans opløste grænserne mellem kunst og design. Parallelt begyndte Byströms tankeproces også med et arkitektonisk udgangspunkt, hvor hun "kombinerede bestemte byggelementer", allerede inden det pågældende værk begyndte at få sit eget liv. "Byen er konstruktionen," har hun sagt i et interview om værket, "og ud af den vokser der noget med sine egne rødder og sin egen livscyklus – træet".

*Baum in der Stadt* har ligesom *Letter in April* rod i et klart defineret motiv (eller "byggeelement"), der høres lige fra begyndelsen: værkets første fem toner, som bevæger sig op mod et højdepunkt på den tredje tone og derefter ned igen, og som derefter konstant fungerer som brændstof for musikens vitalitet. Musikken synes at stræbe efter stabilitet i 'åben kvint'-intervallet og kombinerer sågar knipsede og strøgne klange på samme tid. En knipset passage indfører en

markant rytmisk variation af motivet, og slutteligt drives værket af et mere manisk intenst fokus på motivet frem til de seks afsluttende gentagelser af et dybt A.

*Baum in der Stadt* fik nyt liv i 2020, da værket vandt solokategorien ved de såkaldte Swedish Chamber Games, hvor svenske værker udvælges til at blive markedsført internationalt. Kort efter blev det opført af Anne Ngoc Søe fra Athelas Sinfonietta – en uge inden ensembles uropførelse af Byströms cellokoncert *Figures at the Seaside*.

**Images From the Floating World (2019)**  
Den største af alle islandske sagaer må være *Njals saga* – den sørgelige beretning om Njal Thorgeirsson fra Bergthorshvol. Den fortæller om en eskalerende fejde mellem islandske bosættere og kulminerer med, at Njals gård bliver brændt ned med ham selv og hans familie indeni. Den eneste overlevende, Njals nevø Kari, sværger at hævne sin onkel, men lader sig

overtale til at deltage i en storstilet retssag, der ender med, at de ansvarlige for afbrændingen af Njals gård bliver sendt i landflygtighed. Blandt nøgletemaerne finder man udholdenhed, retfærdighed, konflikt og sjælsstyrke.

I 2019 stod cellisten Maria Isabel Edlund (i samarbejde med Aarhus Unge Tonekunstnere) bag den sceniske koncert *SEGIA*, hvor en komponist fra henholdsvis Island, Finland, Danmark, Norge og Sverige blev bestilt til at skrive et værk inspireret af sagaen til ensemblet Taïga – på det tidspunkt en gruppe bestående af fire strygere. Bestillingerne blev uropført på Godsbanen i Aarhus i september 2019.

Fra Byströms hånd kom strygekvartetten *Images From the Floating World*. Den består af seks korte satsers med hver sin musikalske foredragsbetegnelse. "Con moto" ("med bevægelse") henter sin energi fra en pendulbevægelse. En swingførelse slår rod i "Ritmico" ("rytmisk"),

hvor en melodi træder frem og bliver sendt rundt mellem instrumenterne, efterhånden som klangfladerne bygges op. "Leggiero" ("let") har nogle af de samme egenskaber som en islandsk folkesang (en "tvísiöngur") med et enkelt lyrisk tema introduceret gennem blide, rytmiske forskydninger, der efterhånden kommer under akkordmæssigt pres.

"Grazioso" ("graciøst") er kendetegnet ved en spøgelsesagtig, bølgelignende figur med brug af overtoner, som først høres hos bratschen, men efterhånden suger alle fire strygere til sig. "Energico" ("energisk") får sin energi fra en lille partikelaccelerator af gentagne toner (et fjernt ekko af Carl Nielsens 3. symfoni), før opildnende, enstemmige toner og synkoper driver satsen fremad nærmest som en urkraft i retning af den dybe "udånding", der lukker satsen. I den afsluttende "Con moto" opstår en enkel melodi af en pizzicato-figuration og bliver bygget op som en kanon, der støt fører musikken ud i en mere kompliceret

samtale, indtil den til sidst bliver nedbrudt på vej mod sin afslutning.

### Figures at the Seaside (2020)

Efter projektet med AUT henvendte Taigas cellist Maria Isabel Edlund sig til Byström for at få hende til at skrive cellokoncerten *Figures at the Seaside* til sin kommende debutkoncert i 2020 fra solistklassen på Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium. Uropførelsen skulle have fundet sted i april, men blev aflyst på grund af de sociale restriktioner i forbindelse med covid-19-pandemien. Værket endte derfor med at blive uropført den 17. oktober 2021 i KoncertKirken i København af Edlund og Athelas Sinfonietta, der var medbestiller af koncerten.

Byström havde skrevet solokonserter for strygere før men alle i den traditionelle form med en solist over for et stort orkester. Dette værk blev anderledes og kombinerede celloens menneskelignende stemme med et alsidigt lille ensemble bestående af

solotræblæsere, messing, strygere, harpe, slagtøj samt et fremtrædende parti for klaver og vibrafon.

Komponisten arbejdede tæt sammen med Edlund om værket og tog udgangspunkt i cellistens spillestil og forhold til J.S. Bachs musik. Værket gør brug af prælude nr. 12 i f-mol fra *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier*, bind II – Bystöm kalder sit værk “en fantasi” med Bachs prælude for tangentinstrument som sit “udgangspunkt”.

Koncertens titel er hentet fra et surrealistisk maleri af Pablo Picasso, hvor man ser store, runde kroppe ligge sammenfiltret på en gul sandstrand. Ud over det konkrete maleri forestillede Byström sig under arbejdet med værket også fragmenter af Bachs figurative musik blive skyllet op på en strand eller kyst (titlens “figurer”) og dér blive samlet op og sat sammen igen. Opbygningen af det ensatsede værk er beslægtet med den “promenade” gennem et kunstgalleri, man hører i Modest Mus-

sorgskijs *Udstillingsbilleder*, i og med at ensemblet udgør “bevægelsesretningen” mellem forskellige billeder eller satser. Det Mussorgskij-inspirerede konstruktionsprincip har længe været et særkende ved Byströms musik, og hendes katalog omfatter flere end 20 “gå”-værker i form af musikalske vandringer med glimt af landskaber, idéer eller andre komponisters værker.

Som lytter bliver man omgående opmærksom på de fritstående gentagelsesmønstre af nøjagtig samme slags som i de foregående værker. Bestanddelene flyder sammen, og musikken begynder sin rejse gennem forskellige tilstande, hvoraf en af de første er en “ritmico”-sektion begyndende med den knipsede solocello (en af få efterklange af *Images From the Floating World*). Musikken bevæger sig hurtigt over i en strøget cellomelodi af arketypisk Byströmform, før celloen dukker mere spids og animeret op i et “leggiero”-afsnit, der indledes af klaver og slagtøj i lyse

tonehøjder. Efter glasagtige akkorder i en “calmo”-passage synes klaveret at forvandle sig til en vibrafon.

Efter afsnit vekslede mellem mådehold og energi begynder ensemblet at påtage sig en mere aktiv og ekspressionistisk rolle, hvor gnistrende skarpe salver udgør portaler for solocello og slagtøj, der hele tiden rækker ud efter mere klangligt skingre instrumenter. Cellostemmen opbygger en æterisk dialog med andre strygere hen mod en form for kadence, hvorefter kredsende messing begynder at indhylle celloen i en korallignede idé hentet hos Bach. Mens solocelloen vipper i horisonten af sit toneomfang, får den støtte af en trækfløjte og de lyse blæsere på vej mod sin sidste opstigning.

**Anne Ngoc Søe** er anerkendt som en af Danmarks mest erfarne og dedikerede musikere inden for ny musik. Hun begyndte som fireårig at spille violin efter Suzuki-metoden. 15 år

gammel vandt hun guldmedalje i Berlinske Musikkonkurrence med Paganinis violinkoncert og repræsenterede Danmark ved en Eurovisionkoncert. Samme år begyndte hun på Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium i Milan Viteks violinklasse. Senere studerede hun hos Marta Lібalová i Aarhus og hos den legendariske violinist Ruggiero Ricci i Salzburg.

Anne Ngoc Søe debuterede i 1991, og som solist spiller hun violinkoncerter fra hele repertoire, dog med speciale i den helt nye musik. I de senere år har hun uropført flere markante violinkoncerter, blandt andet Morten Olsens *The Heart of Darkness* i 2019 og Tyler Futrells *Fresh Air* i 2020, begge med Athelas Sinfonietta. I 2020 blev hendes udgave af Karl Aage Rasmussens violinkoncert *Sinking Through the Dream Mirror* udgivet på det anmelderroste album *Alone & Together* (Dacapo Records).

Anne Ngoc Søe er medlem af Copenhagen Phil og har undervist på Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatori-

um siden 2008. Hun er koncertmester i Athelas Sinfonietta og har indspillet adskillige album med ensemblet.

**Maria Isabel Edlund** er en dansk cellist, der, som hun selv siger det, "er så heldig at arbejde sammen med alle sine yndlingskomponister". Hun fokuserer på at skabe tætte samarbejder med komponisterne for at finde kernen i musikken og for at undersøge, hvad en koncert kan rumme, og hvordan den klassiske musik kan og bør udfordres. Hendes komponistsamarbejder inkluderer navne som Bára Gísladóttir, Britta Byström, Niels Rønsholdt og Louise Alenius. Maria Isabel Edlund elsker celloens væsen og med respekt, nysgerrighed og spilleglæde formidler hun instrumentets mange facetter.

I 2019 stod hun (i samarbejde med AUT) bag den sceniske koncert *SEGĪA*, hvor krydsfeltet mellem ny kammermusik, lys og design blev undersøgt og udfordret. Derudover har hun i en årrække, sammen med violinisten Cæcilie Balling, arrangeret



Maria Isabel Edlund

festivalen *The House*, der, udover at udvide rammerne for den klassiske musik, også undersøgte betydningen af et utraditionelt koncertrums særlige identitet med værker skrevet til rummet og på stedets præmisser.

Maria Isabel Edlund er uddannet ved Musikhögskolan i Malmö og debuterede fra Det Jyske Musikonservatoriums solistklasse i 2020. Hun har modtaget Aennchen og Eigil Harbys Fond, hvilket har muliggjort videre studier og projekter i udlandet. Hun er medlem af Athelas Sinfonietta og ensemblet Taïga. I efteråret 2022 udkom hendes debutudgivelse *Applause*, der præsenterer Edlunds store kærlighed til ny kompositionsmusik og barokken på én og samme tid.

**Athelas Sinfonietta** er blandt de førende danske ensembler inden for ny kompositionsmusik. Ensemblet optræder til koncerter, ved operaforestillinger, på festivaler og internationale turnéer. Siden grundlæggelsen i 1990 har Athelas Sinfonietta opført

omkring 700 værker, en stor del deraf som uropførelser, og har samarbejdet med fremtrædende solister, dirigenter og komponister, blandt andre Steve Reich, Per Nørgård, Heiner Goebbels, Poul Ruders, Arvo Pärt, David Lang, Christian Lindberg, Reinbert de Leeuw, Thomas Adès, Ilan Volkov, Paul Hillier, George Benjamin, Philippe Leroux og Pierre-André Valade.

Athelas Sinfonietta lægger vægt på internationalt samarbejde, og har i de senere år optrådt i lande som England, Monaco, USA og Frankrig. Ensemblet har indspillet en lang række album for Dacapo Records med musik af komponister som Niels Rosing-Schow, Karl Aage Rasmussen, Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen, Ole Buck, Rune Glerup, Per Nørgård og Ib Nørholm. Ensemblet er hvert år ensemble-in-residence ved KLANG – Copenhagen Avantgarde Music Festival.

### DDD

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World premiere recording