



Jens Peter Møller (b. 1989)

## Compilation

Compilation (2019)

for 5 percussionists, piano, synthesizer, guitar and double bass

1	I. (new pattern)	1:44
2	II. (interlude)	1:13
3	III. (combine)	7:16
4	IV. (kalimba music)	3:04
5	V. (untitled movement 1)	2:50
6	VI. (untitled movement 2)	1:30

Total 17:40

World premiere recording

K!ART

*Percussion*

Hsiao-Tung Yuan <sup>1, 3, 5, 6</sup>

Ying-Hsueh Chen <sup>1, 3, 5, 6</sup>

Kalle Hakosalo <sup>1, 3, 5, 6</sup>

Matias Seibæk <sup>1, 3, 6</sup>

Łukasz Szyszko <sup>1, 2, 3, 5, 6</sup>

*Keyboard*

Rob Durnin <sup>1, 3, 5, 6</sup>

Joss Smith <sup>1-6</sup>

*Electric guitar*

Mikkel Schou <sup>1, 3, 5, 6</sup>

*Double bass*

Thora Kidon Jæger <sup>1, 2, 3, 5, 6</sup>

Conducted by

Jens Peter Møller



Jens Peter Møller © Mariam Niaré

## Shifting Energy

By Jens Povlsen

‘Composition is a game where I shift energy around.’

This is how Jens Peter Møller describes his approach to creating music. It is a statement full of immediacy, but behind the words lies a keen and intense awareness. When a composer faces infinity – the blank score and its untold possibilities – play is not an escape, but a necessary strategy to get the energy flowing. You have to find somewhere to begin.

The work *Compilation* (2019), which premiered at the PULSAR Festival in Copenhagen that same year, is the result of precisely such a strategy. It was not conceived as a finished idea, more or less ready to be filled in; rather, it has grown organically from the ground up in Møller’s hands. While completing his composition studies at the conservatoire in Copenhagen, Møller, whose roots lie in both rock and jazz, chose to disregard conventional forms. There would be no string quartet, no traditional chamber music setup. He wanted to assemble his own team.

The result was an ensemble that most resembles a super-sized band: five percussionists, two pianists (piano and synthesiser), electric guitar, double bass, and a conductor. The emphasis on percussion is no accident. According to Møller, percussionists often possess a particular openness to sound; when presented with a new sound source, they rarely ask ‘why?’, but rather a curious ‘how?’.

## Sampling Reality

It is exactly this ‘how?’ that drives Møller’s work. He is a composer who needs to ‘touch’ the sound. While working on *Compilation*, he isolated himself in an empty country house, filled the living room with instruments, and began his search. He describes his method as akin to hip-hop’s use of samples: he finds a sound – a deep note on a double bass, a scrape, a pitch bend on a synthesizer – and examines it as if it were a physical object.

These sounds become pieces in a jigsaw puzzle where the final picture is unknown. ‘My ideas don’t reveal themselves to me as grand, cohesive sequences,’ he explains. The material emerges as isolated islands of sound that must be processed, honed, twisted, and turned before eventually finding their place in the whole. It is a matter of trust – a belief that if you listen to the fragments long enough, they will begin to talk to one another. A piano chord might awaken the memory of a film; the sound of a sardine tin insists on being heard. The task is to organise these energies until they form a pattern.

## The Hidden Engine

But what binds these fragments together? In *Compilation*, there is a distinct rhythmic undercurrent – what Møller calls a ‘hidden engine.’ Through several journeys to Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Mali, he has acquired a rhythmic understanding that differs markedly from the Western classical tradition.

Whereas in the West we are often taught to count time and let rhythm submit to harmony, the tempo in West African music is a phenomenon that arises in the space between the musicians. It is a collective feeling; nobody keeps the pulse

for the others – everyone carries it. Slight shifts are not mistakes, but a way of expressing life. This philosophy permeates the work. It is music where time bends, and where the musicians are invited to feel one another rather than merely count bar lines on a page.

### **A Pocket of Time**

Across the six movements of *Compilation*, Møller draws the listener into this distinct pocket of time. It opens with '(new pattern); a frantic and polyrhythmic movement where deconstructed rhythms weave a web of irregular time signatures. It is the sound of the engine starting. From here, the music moves into a meditative exploration of the harmonic series on the synthesiser, onwards to the collage '(combine)'; where the fragments collide, before culminating in a sixth movement where the entire ensemble unites in an unbroken chain of unison rhythms.

Along the way, we also encounter a simple, mechanical drive. The fourth movement, originally intended for an amplified five-note sardine-tin kalimba, is performed here on a synthesizer solo. It remains a poignant reminder of the work's point of departure: a profound curiosity towards the individual sound, no matter how big or small.

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*Jens Povlsen is editor at Dacapo Records and holds an MA in Musicology. A former presenter for DR P2, his background includes serving as a music critic for Jyllands-Posten, among others.*

**K!ART** [pronounced *klart*] is a Copenhagen-based experimental music ensemble and creative platform, active since 2019. Driven by an open-minded and exploratory approach, the ensemble presents intermedial events ranging from experimental instrumental music and music theatre to multimedia and performance art.

K!ART has collaborated with an extensive range of composers and artists, resulting in over 50 world premieres. The ensemble has featured at numerous festivals, including MINU\_festival\_for\_expanded\_music, SPOR, KLANG, Gaud-eamus, Warsaw Autumn, Uuden Musiikin Lokakuu and Ung Nordisk Musik.

*[www.klart.net](http://www.klart.net)*

## Energi, der flyttes rundt

Af Jens Povlsen

”Komposition er en leg, hvor jeg flytter rundt på energi.”

Sådan beskriver Jens Peter Møller sin indgang til det at skabe musik. Det er et udsagn fuldt af umiddelbarhed, men bag ordene ligger en intens og vågen opmærksomhed. For når man som komponist står over for uendeligheden – det tomme partitur og dets uanede muligheder – er legen ikke en flugt, men en nødvendig strategi for at få energien til at flyde. Man må finde et sted at begynde.

Værket *Compilation* (2019), der blev uropført på PULSAR-festivalen samme år, er resultatet af netop sådan en strategi. Det er ikke et værk, der er undfanget som en færdig idé, mere eller mindre klar til udfyldning; det er snarere vokset frem nedefra, i hænderne på Jens Peter Møller. Da han skulle afslutte sine kompositionsstudier på konservatoriet i København, valgte Møller, der har rødder i både rock og jazz, at se bort fra de vante former. Ingen strygekvartet, ingen kammermusik i traditionel opstilling. Han ville samle sit eget hold.

Resultatet blev et ensemble, der mest af alt ligner et forvokset band: Fem slag-tøjspillere, to pianister (klaver og synthesizer), elektrisk guitar, kontrabas og dirigent. Betoningen af netop slag-tøjet er ikke tilfældig. Ifølge Møller ejer slag-tøjspillere ofte en særlig åbenhed over for lyd; de spørger sjældent ”hvorfors?”, når de præsenteres for en ny lydkilde, men nysgerrigt ”hvordan?”.

### At sample virkeligheden

Det er netop dette ”hvordan?”, der driver Møllers arbejde. Han er en komponist, der har brug for at ’røre’ ved lyden. Under arbejdet med *Compilation* isolerede han sig derfor i et tomt hus på landet, fyldte stuen med instrumenter og begyndelse at lede. Han beskriver selv sin metode som beslægtet med hiphoppens brug af samples: Han finder en lyd – en dyb tone på en kontrabas, et skrab, et pitchbend på en synthesizer – og undersøger den, som var den en fysisk genstand.

Disse lyde bliver til brikker i et puslespil, hvor motivet er ukendt: ”Mine ideer åbenbarer sig ikke for mig som store sammenhængende forløb,” forklarer han. Materialet opstår som isolerede øer af lyd, der skal bearbejdes, files til og vendes og drejes, før de på et tidspunkt finder deres plads i helheden. Det handler om tillid – en tro på, at hvis man lytter længe nok til fragmenterne, vil de begynde at tale sammen. En akkord på et klaver vækker måske en erindring om en film; en lyd fra en sardindåse insisterer på at blive hørt. Opgaven er at organisere disse energier, indtil de danner et mønster.

### Den skjulte motor

Men hvad binder disse fragmenter sammen? I *Compilation* fornemmes en særlig rytmisk understrøm; den, Møller kalder en ”skjult motor”. Gennem adskillige rejser til Ghana, Burkina Faso og Mali har han tilegnet sig en rytmisk forståelse, der adskiller sig markant fra den klassiske vesterlandske tradition. Hvor vi i Vesten ofte lærer at tælle tiden og lade rytmen underkaste sig harmonien, er tempoet i vestafrikansk musik et fænomen, der opstår i rummet mellem musikerne. Det er en kollektiv følelse; ingen holder pulsen for de andre – alle bærer den. Små forskydninger er ikke fejl, men

en måde at udtrykke liv på. Den filosofi gennemsyrrer værket. Det er musik, hvor tiden bøjes, og hvor musikerne inviteres til at mærke hinanden frem for blot at tælle taktstreger på papiret.

### En tidslomme

Gennem de seks satser i *Compilation* tager Møller lytteren med ind i denne særlige tidslomme. Det åbner med '(new pattern)', en hektisk og polyrytmisk sats, hvor dekonstruerede rytmer danner et væv af skæve taktarter. Det er lyden af motoren, der startes. Herfra bevæger musikken sig over i en meditativ undersøgelse af overtonerækken på synthesizer, videre til collagen '(combine)', hvor fragmenterne støder sammen, for at ende i en sjette sats, hvor hele ensemblet forenes i en uafbrudt kæde af unisone rytmer.

Undervejs møder vi også det helt enkle, motoriske setup. Fjerde sats, der oprindeligt var tænkt for en forstærket sardindåse-kalimba med fem toner, spilles her som på synthesizer solo. Det står tilbage som en påmindelse om værkets afsæt: nysgerrigheden over for den enkelte lyd, stor som lille.

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*Jens Povlsen er redaktør hos Dacapo Records og cand.mag. i musikvidenskab. Han er tidligere programmedarbejder i DR P2 og har blandt andet virket som musikkritiker for Jyllands-Posten.*

**K!ART** [udtales *klart*] er et københavnsk ensemble og en kreativ platform for eksperimenterende musik, der har eksisteret siden 2019. Ensemblet er kendetegnet ved en åben og undersøgende tilgang og præsenterer intermediale projekter, der spænder over alt fra eksperimenterende instrumentalmusik til musikteater, multimedie og performancekunst.

Gennem samarbejder med en lang række komponister og kunstnere har K!ART stået for over 50 uopførelser. Gruppen har optrådt på festivaler som MINU\_festival\_for\_expanded\_music, SPOR, KLANG, Gaudeamus, Warszawa Efterår, Uuden Musiikin Lokakuu og Ung Nordisk Musik.

*[www.klart.net](http://www.klart.net)*

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Recording engineer: Sebastian Vinther Olsen

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