

Thomas Agerfeldt Olesen - Der Wind bläset wo er will

Danish National Symphony
Orchestra. Conductor: John
Storgaards. Danish Radio
Concert Hall 29.04.2011



One of our time's most original Danish composers is 42-year-old Thomas Agerfeldt Olesen. His music often possesses the capacity of seeming quite new, whereas still appearing strangely wellknown.

Thomas Agerfeldt Olesen (b. 1969) is an explorer in sound, and he wishes to find new ways to employ the musical "basic discoveries", - his own term for extremely old phenomena like f. inst. major and minor. In stead of disposing of this human mutual property, or ,on the contrary, to use it uncritically and at random, Thomas Agerfeldt Olesen wishes to rediscover music's elements.

"The path I want to follow is a path of attention", he explains. "If, as a composer, I am attentive, I shall realize that, in spite of previously existing discoveries, my mind will move, and that is the reason why they must be rediscovered".

Der Wind bläset wo er will is Thomas Agerfeldt Olesen's hitherto largest orchestra piece. The title was taken from the Gospel of St. John (*Der Wind bläset wo er will*) and is in German, like the work titles of many of Thomas Agerfeldt Olesen's orchestra pieces. Partly because he is a resident of Germany, and partly because he does feel being a member of a German-language modernist music tradition with roots more than 100 years back.

Music of alertness

Thomas Agerfeldt Olesen has mostly written instrumental music "because it is so detached from reality, instrumental music is one of the purest (and thus most difficult) ways into the human mind", he explains. This described relationship between mind and music can also be found in this première of "Der Wind bläset wo er will".

The composer himself wrote an introduction to his thoughts behind the work: "From our baby stage we develop a capacity for alertness. An experience of extreme importance to one's life, which, inexpediently enough, rubs off on our point of view on life: We prefer to know as much as possible in advance, and thus to be "prepared".

When in the forest, it takes us less than 3 seconds to register the most basic facts. Then the picnic may start, and normally, it mainly takes place in the mind: Here is the forest, it is green, the sky is blue, it is lovely and hilly, the birds are singing, - wow, how wonderful! We relax, is what we call it.

Loss of control

When we relax, we feel prepared, we feel that we know in advance what a forest is like. It was my idea that with this piece, where I could create a great number of unexpected sound colours, sound collisions, and rooms, I would be able to create a new kind of forest, where, so to say, the wind blows where it wants to, and not where we intend it to blow. A piece, where I, as a listener, could feel the loss of control.

In order to enhance the listener's sensation of not being in human territory, the music, towards its end, comes across remainders of weathered humanity. I imagined that in the very middle of the tough nature we find an old grave, which turns out to be that of Frédéric Chopin.

In 2012, "Der Wind bläset wo er will" is planned for performance by Aarhus Symphony Orchestra at a concert including video projection. A CD-recording of the work is foreseen for 2013.