

Nordic Voices

Tone E. Braaten, Soprano
Ingrid Hanken, Soprano
Ebba Rydh, Mezzosoprano
Per Kristian Amundrød, Tenor
Frank Havrøy, Baritone
Rolf Magne Schmidt Asser, Bass

Central Christian Center
Joplin, Missouri
February 16 2017

Everything's gonna be alright

Diphonie I, Op. 39	Lasse Thoresen (1949 -)
Second Book of Madrigals: Poi che voi et io più volte abbiam provato	Gavin Bryars (1943 -)
So, ro rara	Frank Havrøy (1969 -)
Scherza Amarilli	Giovanni Gabrieli (1557 – 1612)
O Verdi Selve	Luca Marenzio (1553 – 1599)
Two lovers	Shara (Worden) Nova (1974 -)
Per duo coralli	Luca Marenzio (1553 – 1599)
Se cantano gl'augelli	Giovanni Gabrieli (1557 – 1612)
Bånsull	Frank Havrøy (1969 -)
Second Book of Madrigals: I 'vidi in terra angelici costumi	Gavin Bryars (1943 -)
A Dismantled Ode To The Moral Value Of Art	Maja Ratkje (1973 -)

Program Notes

At one point in Star Wars V, Luke Skywalker asks Yoda whether the dark side of The Force is stronger. Yoda looks at him and answers that the dark side is “quicker, easier, more seductive.” In times like these it is easier to think of all the bad things happening rather than the good ones, and to regard the bad ones as a constant.

In this program, Nordic Voices presents music from the light side of The Force, so to speak. The program is about love, about comfort and about playfulness. It is about focusing on the good side of

life, and about singing music that makes our cheeks go a little bit redder. We hope we can contribute to an evening of light, love, humour, and vocal playfulness.

Lasse Thoresen's *Diphonie I, op.39* is a powerful opening of the program, with extremely versatile use of the six voices of Nordic Voices. Through a playful, folkloristic palette, Lasse plays with vocal effects like overtone singing and Norwegian *kveding*, creating an almost surreal landscape of sounds. The two pieces by Gavin Bryars are both from his collection *Second Book of Madrigals*. Both songs are set on texts by the Italian Renaissance poet Francesco Petrarca. His romantic sonnets to his beloved Laura have become an icon of the Renaissance poetry, and since he lived in the 14th century there have been numerous composers who have set his sonnets to music. Gavin Bryars follows the madrigal tradition, setting an intimate musical space for his texts. The madrigal tradition is again well represented in the works of Giovanni Gabrieli and Luca Marenzio. All of their works in this programme are vivid and colourful examples of madrigals that celebrate love between humans.

Shara (Worden) Nova is an American singer-songwriter. She is also well known under the artistic name *My Brightest Diamond*, and has composed and released several albums under this name. In 2016 she composed *Two Lovers*, a new piece for Nordic Voices, to be premiered during this "Everything's gonna be alright" tour.

The two lullabies presented in this program are both Norwegian folk tunes. They represent a Norwegian folk music tradition that is extremely rich; one can find different versions of these folk songs all over Norway.

Maja Ratkje is one of Norway's most profiled composers. Her music is widely performed, and she is well-known as a singer in contemporary and experimental genres. Her piece *A Dismantled Ode To The Moral Value Of Art* concludes this concert. Through a chaotic and deconstructed musical world, she takes us through the ninth symphony of Ludwig van Beethoven, through extended and extreme vocal techniques, before finally ending the concert with a quote by Neil Young and the lyrics "Everything's gonna be alright."

Texts and Translations

Lasse Thoresen (1949 -)
Diphonie I, Op. 39

Gavin Bryars (1943 -)
Second Book of Madrigals: Poi che voi et io più volte abbiam provato

Poi che voi et io più volte abbiam provato
come 'l nostro sperar torna fallace,
dietro a quel sommo ben che mai non spiace
levate il core a più felice stato.

Questa vita terrena è quasi un prato,
che 'l serpente tra' fiori et l'erba giace;
et s'alcuna sua vista agli occhi piace,
è per lassar più l'animo invescato.

Voi dunque, se cercate aver la mente
anzi l'ex tremo di questa già mai,
seguite i pochi, et non la volgar gente.

Ben si può dire a me: Frate, tu vai
mostrando altrui la via, dove sovente

fosti smarrito, et or sé più che mai.

Since you and I have seen how our hope
has, so many times, turned to disappointment,
raise your heart to a happier state,
towards that great good that never cheats us.

This earthly life's like a meadow, where
a snake hides among the grass and flowers:
and if anything is pleasing to the eye,
it leaves the spirit more entangled.

So you, who've always sought a mind
at peace, before the final day,
follow the few, and not the common crowd.

Though you could well say to me: 'Brother
you show the way to others, from which
you've often strayed, and now more than ever.

Frank Havrøy (1969 -)

So, ro rara

(folketone fra Ørsta)

So, ro, rara
i morrå ska vi fara
opp åt Gudbrandsdala,
der æ godt å vara.
Der vekser lauken,
der galder gauken,
der bygger sulua
høgt oppi furua,
duver med blåe gull-luver

Lulley, my dear

(folk tune from Ørsta)

Lulley, my dear
tomorrow we will go
up to Gudbrandsdalen
It is a good place to be
Where the onion grows,
where the cuckoo sings
where the swallow
builds high up in the pine tree
swaying with its blue, golden crown

Giovanni Gabrieli (1557 – 1612)

Scherza Amarilli

Scherza Amarilli e Clori e i pargoletti amori
Tra fior danzando al suon d'alte parole
Ostro diventan pallide viole
S'allegran' gl'elementi

E d'aura i bei concenti
S'odono mormorar in ogni canto
Cagion n'e sol di Giorgio il sommo vanto

Amarilli and Clori are playing and their small love dances between flowers at the sounds of distinguished words.
Their purple coloured clothes turn pale violet in the way the encouragement and the wind contains memories in each song.
And this is why Giorgio's sun is so highly honoured.

Luca Marenzio (1553 – 1599)

O verdi Selve

O verdi selve, o dolci fonti,
O rivi, o luoghi ermi e selvaggi,
Pini, abeti, ginerpri, allori e faggi:
Ecco, e tu che rispondi al mio lamento,
Chi può dar fine a sì crudel fortuna?

Una – Dunque sol una,
E fa così lacrimevol contento?
Cento – Non son già cento, e pur son molte
In bella festa accolte:
Come una potrà dunque il mal fornire?
Ire – Per ira mia né per dispetto,
Non avrà fine amor nel nostro petto.

Oh verdant forests, oh sweet fountains,
Oh streams, oh solitary, wild places,
Pines, firs, junipers, laurels and beech-woods:
Oh graceful birds, simple and lascivious,
Echo, and you who answer my lament,
Who can put an end to such cruel fortune?

One – So only one then,
That brings forth such a tearful melody?
A hundred – There aren't a hundred dyet, thought many welcomed to a merry feast:
How then can one alone bring about disgrace?
Rage – Because of my rage for no mer grudge,
Love shall have no end in our bosom.

Shara Nova (1974 -)

Two Lovers

Two lovers rest in a valley
between two mountains.
They lie in a bed of strange weeds
that are topped with white puffs, like cottonballs.
Gusts of wind make the cottonballs ripple
Like ocean waves.
As the sun sets behind the western ridge
A jagged shadow creeps slowly toward the lovers.

One of them pulls the other close and says "This is how it should be" and the other one puts his head on his lover's chest in agreement. Together they watch as the darkness envelops them.

Almighty Shadow, Consume the valley,
the ravine and stream.

Swallow the dirt and moss, my lover and me. Oh, let us die beautifully.

Luca Marenzio (1553 – 1599)

Per duo coralli

Per duo coralli ardenti
Hor moro, hor torno in vita
E l'aura, ch'indi spira è si gradita
Che di mille tormenti
Bramo sentir l'assalto in mezz'al petto
Per morir e rinascere in diletto

For the light from these two shining pearls
I die and come back to life.
And the aura which comes from them is so pleasant
That I long to feel a thousand torments
strike me right in my heart
So as to die and come back to life in delight

Giovanni Gabrieli (1557 – 1612)

Se cantano gl'augelli

Se cantano gl'augelli di sora gl'arboscetti,
Se scherzane gl'animali Ne i campi punti d'amorosi strali,
Se guizzando festeggiano nell' onde
I pesci fra le grott' ime e profonde:
Perché non faccio anch'io?
Palese l'amor mio!
Cantiam dunque pastori,
Viva la bella Dori.

If the birds that sing above us in the trees,
the animals that play in the fields
and the fish that happy swim in the grottos all are hit by the arrows of love, I announce:
Why don't they hit me?
Reveal for me the mystery of love!
The shepherds sing:
Long live the beauty Dori.

Frank Havrøy (1969 -)

Bånsull

(folketone fra Østerdalen)

Sulla meg litt du mamma mi,
Ska du få snor i trøya di,
Vil du ha gule vil du ha blå,
Vil du ha blanke skal du det få
På trøya di, du mamma mi.

Lullaby

(folk tune from Østerdalen)

Sing me a lullaby, mother,
and you shall have a ribbon for your dress.
Do you want yellow or blue?
A bright ribbon is yours
if you like, mother, for your dress.

Gavin Bryars (1943 -)

Second Book of Madrigals: I 'vidi in terra angelici costumi

I' vidi in terra angelici costumi
et celesti bellezze al mondo sole,
tal che di rimembrar mi giova et Dole,
ché quant'io miro par sogni, ombre et fumi;

et vidi lagrimar que' duo bei lumi,
ch'àn fatto mille volte invidia al sole;
et udì' sospirando dir parole
che farian gire i monti et stare i fiumi.

Amor, Senno, Valor, Pietate, et Doglia
facean piangendo un più dolce contento
d'ogni altro che nel mondo udir si soglia;

ed era il cielo a l'armonia sì intento
che non se vedea in ramo mover foglia,
tanta dolcezza avea pien l'aere e 'l vento.

Maja Ratkje (1973 -)

A Dismantled Ode To The Moral Value Of Art

Everything's gonna be alright.