

NIKOLAUS VON BEMBERG

DEBUTKONCERT

17. april 2024
Kl. 19.30

Konservatoriets Koncertsal
Julius Thomsens Gade 1

KLAVER



DET KONGELIGE DANSKE
MUSIKKONSERVATORIUM

Gratis adgang

dkdm.dk

NIKOLAUS VON BEMBERG

Nikolaus von Bemberg is a German musician and artist from Munich based in Copenhagen. He has been educated in classical piano and focuses on performing contemporary music styles.

Besides the piano he is interested in filming, analogue synthesizers and music education. He experiments with new concert formats within the classical music traditions and is currently working on a research project about how to incorporate linguistic and visual components to exhibit art music at The Royal Danish Academy of Music.

PROGRAMME

A DAY IN THE LIFE (PREMIERE)

Nikolaus von Bemberg

With Bless Amada and Cecillie Klausen

Stylist: Matija Max Vidovic

Material being used:

Ludwig van Beethoven. Sonata op. 57 No. 23 Interpretation Wilhelm Kempf (1959)

Jürg Frey. String quartet No. 4 first movement Interpretation Quatuor Bozzini (2024)

Franz Schubert. Sonata A minor D 784 first movement

Rainer Maria Rilke. From: Letters to a young poet. Letter No. 6 Rome 23 December 1903

Thanks for your help realising the piece:

Rob Durnin. Connor McLean. Cornelia Karlsson. Emil Vijgen.

REGARD DE L'ESPRIT DE JOIE (1944)

Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)

From Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus: No. 10

Intermission (20 minutes)

FRAGMENTS (2020-2022)

Connor McLean (b. 1996)

With Connor McLean

Featuring James Black on video

The piece was commissioned by Nikolaus von Bemberg with support from KODA Kultur and premiered 2022 at MINU Festival for expanded music in Copenhagen.

JE DORS, MAIS MON COEUR VEILLE (1944)

Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)

From Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus: No 19

About a day in the life

As a performer, I am used to presenting a perfect version in the concert hall. Visible to the audience is an effortless performance without flaws and a certain artificiality. But this only represents a small part of my work as a performer.

In A day in the life I treat the perfect version as secondary, one that is not shown. But the before and after. This is presented in various acoustic and visual events. The actor functions here as a speaker and leads us into his world of thoughts accompanied by a fragmentary landscape of sounds and associative images.

Spaces from the everyday world and surreal dream worlds open up. The film sequences, which partly function as stage sets, create the setting in which the actor moves. They partly follow the actor's stream of thought, but also take place separately and create a dynamic of their own that influences the tempo. The pace of the film sequences creates a satire on our sense of time - how we divide and categorise our time. And so ultimately a hierarchy of time division finds its way into our lives.

The piece aims to provide access for the listener on several levels and creating spaces in which to experience music. For me, it is interesting to address the concert hall as a performance space. It provides a strong framework. When a piece begins and ends there, we can usually answer clearly what is music and what is not. In new and contemporary music, this division is no longer made so clearly, because extended means of expression flow into the pieces and question this understanding of music. An understanding of music that is not self-evident in the traditional classical practice.

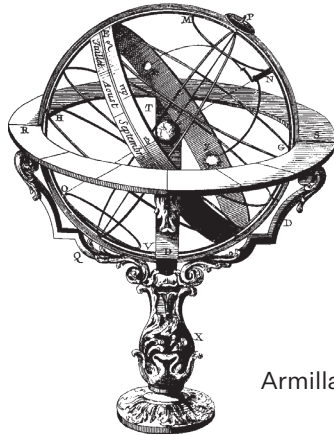
The audience is confronted here with situations that take place inside and outside the concert space and are perceived musically. The question that interests me is what does art music in a concert have to do with my experience of the world.

Bless Amada and I seek answers to this question in a playful way. Contemplative impressions, rhythmic coupled sequences of sound and image or poetic-romantic moments throw different perspectives on it. The actor himself takes on different roles: that of the performer in front of an audience, that as a private person, and that as the spectator himself, focusing on the self in the concert hall with the background of the self in the world.

Messiaen

For me as a pianist, Messiaen's piano music means transforming the piano into a sounding body that no longer reminds me of the piano as such. Shriill bells, bird calls, colourful mixtures of sounds, inner contemplation and abstract recurring architecture such as we find in the rock formations of a high mountain range. Messiaen's music is composed kaleidoscopically from these images. As in the measurement of a celestial body with an armillary sphere, the mechanical components of this music switch into scenes and unfold a larger picture and come to life.

This music is particularly effective when it is played with a cool head and one does not allow oneself to be carried away by a romantic interpretation. For the pianist, this means prioritising the exactness of the form and its precise execution. The success of such a version is challenged by technical difficulties and I try to meet this demand in my interpretation, nevertheless, his music tempts me to take a more intuitive, naive approach, even to the point of romantic agogic.



Armillary sphere

FRAGMENTS

Fragments (2020-22) is a piece (as the title suggests) made up of fragmented parts, pieces of an incomprehensibly large piece, a relic from the future that Connor McLean and Nikolaus von Bemberg fail to completely reassemble. The work sees the two friends investigate death, mythology, geography and memory through a variety of different media, contexts and constellations. Fragments was written at the height of the covid 19 pandemic which felt like it would go on forever when the future seemed increasingly impossible to visualize; a feeling that seems to linger on into the present.



Roland Juno-60 Synthesizer. Built between 1982 and 1984 in Japan. Used in Fragments on top of a grand piano.

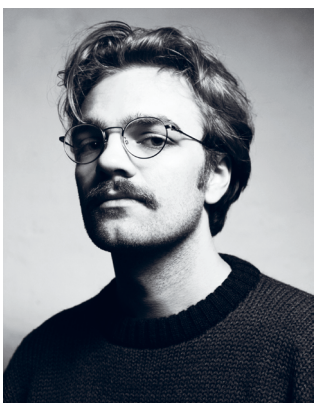


Bless Amada was born in Lome/Togo and followed his father to Munich at the age of ten. He began training as an electrical engineer before completing his acting studies at the Otto Falckenberg School. While still a student, he plays at the Münchner Kammerspiele and in various television productions.

In 2020, he was awarded the Proskension Young Talent Award for Performing Arts. After graduating in 2021, he was a member of the ensemble at Vienna's Burgtheater for two seasons. Bless Amada is known to a wider audience for his leading role in the Netflix series "Kitz". Most recently, he took on the role of a detective in the German crime series Polizeiruf 110.



Cecillie Klausen, based in Copenhagen, is a photographer and cinematographer currently studying at The National Film School of Denmark. Her work focuses on themes such as identity, intimacy, gaze, movement, and documentary. Cecillie Klausen's photography and cinematography often explore the intersection of personal narratives with capturing moments of vulnerability, authenticity, and human connection within her subjects.



Connor McLean is a composer and performer from Chicago Land based in Copenhagen Denmark. In his work varying forms of media, performance practice and musical traditions converge into sometimes nostalgic, sometimes humorous, sensitive pieces of music. He draws upon a diverse array of aesthetic traditions and consciously references his background as a songwriter and non-classical musician. He regularly performs as a vocalist in both his own music and his colleagues'. As a composer and artist he is interested in private life and the accidental/incidental expressions of ourselves in our material culture.

The subject of self love draws a negative boundary between him or herself and the big other. The narcissistic subject on the other hand never manages to set any clear boundaries. In consequence the border between the narcissistic and the big other becomes blurry. The world appears only as adumbrations of the narcissistic self which is incapable of recognising the big other in his or her otherness much less acknowledging this otherness for what it is. Meaning can exist for the narcissistic self only when it somehow catches sight of itself. It wades in its own shadow everywhere until it drowns in itself.

Excerpt from *Agony of the Eros*, first chapter „Melancholia“ by Byung-Chul Han.
Translated into English by Erik Butler

Thanks to:

Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium under the direction of Niels Rosing-Schow. Niklas Sivelöv. Anne Gry Haugland. Helmut Bauer. Bless Amada. Connor McLean. Cecillie Klausen. Matija Max Vidovic. Mikkel Schou. Cornelia Karlsson. Rob Durnin. Emil Vijgen. Signe Møldrup Zink. Sebastian Vinther. Jonas Munch-Hansen. Cristopher Catton. Zende Storlind. Pelle Vogel. Sara Vibe Benfield. Anne Heide.

If you wish to get informed about upcoming performances of Nikolaus von Bemberg please leave a note at this email: nikolausvonbemberg@gmail.com