



CIKADA

Night Windows

A portrait concert of Bent Sørensen and the Cikada Ensemble



Bent Sørensen studied composition with Ib Nørholm at the Royal Danish Academy of Music and with Per Nørgård at the Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus. Sørensen has composed in a variety of mediums, including, orchestra, choir, chamber ensemble and solo instruments. Since 2008

he has been a visiting professor of composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

Works:

The Hill of the Heartless Giant (2001)
Double bass solo

The Lady of Shalott (1993)
String Quartet

Vuggeviser (2000)
Piano solo

The Lady and the Lark (1997)
viola solo and fl, cla, perc, 2 vl, vlc

The Weeping White Room (2002)
fl, cla, pno, perc, 2 vl, vla, vlc, cb

The Songs of the Decaying Garden (1986/92)
Clarinet solo

The Deserted Churchyards (1990)
fl, cla, pno, perc, vl, vlc

Funeral Procession (1989)
fl, cla, pno, perc, 2 vl, vla, vlc

Cikada

c/o Sentralen, Øvre Slottsgate 3, postboks 183, N-0102 Oslo



About the concert cycle:

Danish Composer Bent Sørensen's works could be said to come into being as a kind of soft, beautifully detailed resonance or imprint of emotions evoked by something other than the sound itself.

This other could be a sequence of reactions flowing in a film character by Ettore Scola, the ambiguity in a string of Victorian poetry, the memory of the sound of an old piano or the experience of one's eyes moving on the surface of a painting. These multiple modes of inspiration are also reflected in clandestine yet touching titles such as *The Weeping White Room* or *The Hill of the Heartless Giant*.



The concert cycle *Night Windows*, which borrows its name from a painting by Edward Hopper, has been created by the composer in a unique, close collaboration with the nine musicians and the conductor of the Oslo-based Cikada ensemble. *Night Windows* now consists of eight pieces by Sørensen, played in one, continuous sequence without

breaks, the complete cycle lasting for a little more than an hour. The scoring of the cycle oscillates between solo pieces, small chamber constellations and the full ensemble. This instrumental variation is also reflected in the fact that the spatial locations of the musicians on stage change for each piece.

The pieces are not just chained together, though. Sørensen also blurs the borders between some of them by letting the end of one piece bleed into the beginning of the next. This intrusion also appears the other way around, creating the impression of the music flowing in the opposite direction of time.

"I sometimes think of a listener's way through *Night Windows* as linked to his moving through an exhibition", Sørensen says. "In one movement, the music might pull him forward. Then a

resonance of something that has been creates a possibility to change direction and have an experience of returning. My music very often is about how things are changed by time. Contained in this is also a sense of loss and decay."

The cycle itself was initiated with a move pointing back in time, when Sørensen decided to write a prelude to an already existing work: *Funeral Procession*, the piece inspired by the film sequence by Scola. The prelude was called *The Deserted Churchyards*. It was upon hearing Cikada perform these two pieces that the idea of conceiving an entire concert cycle in collaboration with them started to form in Bent Sørensen's mind. From then on, six pieces, including three written especially for Cikada, have been added to the cycle. The sextet *The Deserted Churchyards* and the octet *Funeral Procession* now form the two final parts of *Night Windows*.

"The music contains a dimension of depth, a contrast between something immediate and something distant", Sørensen says. "One part of this is the sense of different layers of sound bleeding into or shining through each other. Another is the spatialisation of the sound being installed in a space."

Bent Sørensen thinks of *Night Windows* as a long-term, evolving project, in a unique composer-performer relationship with Cikada. "I have considered adding a new layer to the clarinet solo, merging into the end of the second and the beginning of the third movement of the clarinet solo", he says, suggesting to fetch the material for this in the piece for piano solo, thus creating new connections across time between the two. "As furniture in a house", he says. "They need to be changed every now and then".

Hild Borchgrevink

Cikada: Since its 1989 formation in Oslo, the Cikada Ensemble has developed a refined and highly acclaimed profile on the international contemporary music scene. From the very beginning, Cikada has consisted of flute, clarinet, piano, percussion, string quintet and conductor Christian Eggen. All ten are equal, permanent members, and the ensemble has become synonymous with *the Oslo Sound* of fresh, vibrant, warm and virtuosic interpretations of consciously selected, contemporary repertoire.

In concerts at major international festivals and on numerous albums, Cikada's distinct ensemble profile manifests itself in



strong programming. Integral to this work is a wish to develop long-term collaborations with composers and to build composer portraits with commissioned works over time.

The nine musicians also form various formations within the group: Cikada String Quartet

and Cikada Trio (flute, clarinet, piano) and Piano Trio work as independent Cikada units, adding to the ensemble's international identity.

Cikada was awarded the prestigious Nordic Music Prize in 2005.

www.cikada.no

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