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In The End His Voice Will Be The Sound Of Paper

KIM MYHR, JENNY HVAL: Seed · Silence A Beat · Something New · Me, You, Me, You · The Beak · Mass · Even The Vowels · Soft As Tongues

Kim Myhr: 12-string guitar and voice on 'Mass' · Jenny Hval: voice · Christian Wallumrød: piano and harmonium · Rhodri Davies: harp · Kari Rønnekleiv: viola · Michael Duch: bass · Jim Denley: flutes, balloons, saxophone · Eivind Lønning: trumpet · Espen Reinertsen: saxophone · Klaus Holm: clarinet · Martin Tøxt: tuba · Morten Olsen: percussion · Tor Haugerud: drums

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Together, Kim and Jenny have created the music that became the work "In the End His Voice Will Be the Sound of Paper" – a title that materialised during a conversation about Bob Dylan's aging voice. The work premiered at the Ultima Oslo Contemporary Music Festival in 2012, and was then described as a musical combination of improvisation, contemporary Feldmanian music, pop and the spoken word. The form of the music is fascinating – like a wind that suddenly arises and builds up a song before vanishing again just as swiftly and naturally. The album version was recorded at Rainbow Studio in Oslo in August 2014, and was later mixed at Amper Tone Studio with technician Jonny Skalleberg. This is powerful music that has the necessary backbone and is eloquently moving at the same time. This is music that richly rewards the listener who can focus keenly on it.

Improvisation as method

Kim Myhr works a good deal with improvisation, a working method that also appeals to Jenny. "Kim gave me a lot of sketches and music, I wrote the melody and lyrics, and we improvised. This is a collaborative effort, even if it is mostly Kim's music. It's his artistic vision, and it was a great honour for me to be able to take part in it, because you can learn a lot by working with fantastic people," she said in a recent interview.

One goal that they shared was wanting the process to be quick and intuitive. Kim regards Jenny's vocals and lyrics as an instrument, an element of the sonic texture like those produced by the others in the ensemble. For Kim it was exciting to "boil down" his own style to the bare essentials – only playing acoustic guitar – while Jenny's expressed ambition was to try to accentuate the emotional aspects of the music.

"Sometimes I feel that improvised and abstract music is trying desperately to avoid the emotional elements that can be inherent in the music. This was something I thought a lot about when we were going to work with this recording. That's why I wanted to write romantic lyrics. There is a sense of longing in these lyrics. I wanted to combine something charming, in both the lyrics and the melody, something that wants to be loved, with this more abstract and fragmentary music. I'm interested in vulnerability; the music must have a kind of vulnerability at some level."

About the musicians

Kim Myhr has been one of the leading voices on the experimental scene in Norway in recent years, as both a composer and a guitarist. He tours frequently in Europe, Australia, Asia and North and South America. In March 2014 he released the critically acclaimed solo record "All Your Limbs Singing" (SOFA), which was reminiscent of both early Feldman and Ligeti's sound masses, but which also had an energy and simplicity that could bring American folk music to mind. Myhr is an active composer, and writes for chamber ensembles, electroacoustic settings and various theatrical projects. He is also a member of the trio MURAL along with Jim Denley and Ingar Zach.

On this occasion the unique Trondheim Jazz Orchestra is entirely acoustic, and is formed of 11 musicians with backgrounds in jazz, improvisational music and contemporary music who come from Norway, Wales and Australia, all of whom were hand-picked by Kim. Most of them also played on Kim's previous work with the orchestra and vocalist Sidsel Endresen in 2009: "Stems and Cages", a work that astounded both audiences and critics at its premiere in Molde Cathedral during the Molde Jazz Festival. A critic from Norwegian radio's P2 called the concert "surprising, compelling" and "totally ground-breaking" (Jazznytt).

In the past few years Jenny Hval has had an international breakthrough with the albums "Apocalypse, girl" (Sacred Bones) in

2015 and "Innocence is Kinky" in 2013 (Rune Grammofon), the latter produced by John Parish. She has collaborated with Jessica Sligter, as well as with Håvard Volden on the project Nude on Sand, with its eponymous album, in 2012 (SOFA). She has also written a commissioned work together with Jessica Sligter. "Meshes of a Voice" (SusannaSonata), which she recorded with Susanna, was awarded a Spellemannspris (Norwegian Grammy) in 2015. In 2009 she published the novel "Perlebryggeriet".

The album is being released as a CD, DL and a 2LP (45 rpm) with printed inner sleeves.

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"- There's nothing particularly jazzy about Trondheim Jazz Orchestra's new album with Kim Myhr and Jenny Hval, but it's an arresting piece of work, setting the latter's eerie and sensual vocals against chilly strings and the creepy spindles of Rhodri Davies' harp. (The Quietus / Stewart Smith)"

"- The eight songs grow from airy inchoate first promptings, build to a climax, then mysteriously vanish again, like a series of fantastical, sometimes alarming ("Mass") daydreams. Hval adds words of longing to give emotional depths and resonance to Myhr and the Trondheim Jazz Orchestra's more abstract ruminations. [Jazzwise / Robert Shore]"

"- Det här är andra gången TJO samarbetar med gitarristen Kim Myhr, den här gången bjöd han i sin tur in sångerskan och textmakerskan Jenny Hval. Ett smått genialt beslut. De båda tar med sig olika uttryck som glider in i och befruktar varandra. [Orkesterjournalen]"