



# Henning Kraggerud: Equinox

HENNING KRAGGERUD: Equinox – 24 Postludes for Violin and Chamber Orchestra

**Henning Kraggerud, violin · Arctic Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra**

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**Alongside a distinguished career as a soloist with some of the world's greatest orchestras, Norwegian star violinist Henning Kraggerud is also a composer. On this new release he combines these two roles in a collaboration with Jostein Gaarder, author of 'Sophie's World'. Welcome to the magical world of Equinox!**

The Brodsky Quartet and Britten Sinfonia are among the various ensembles that have recently commissioned and performed works by Henning Kraggerud. With Equinox, Kraggerud has written four violin concertos, 24 postludes for violin and chamber orchestra, and music for a stage production – all in one work! Since the 17th century, discussions have taken place in Europe about the intrinsic properties of the various musical keys. Theorists, philosophers and composers have left behind fascinating quotes and myths that ignited the inspiration of Gaarder and Kraggerud. They take us on a journey around the world in music and words, through 24 time zones during the 24 hours of a day.

## **Around the world**

The book "The Solitaire Mystery", which ingeniously blends a deck of cards compared to weeks, days and years, gave Kraggerud the idea of a piece based on the number 24. The story of Equinox starts London, where our protagonist finds himself in a difficult situation, awaiting a neurological diagnose. In the middle of the day, he stumbles out into Greenwich Park, where he is catapulted on a kaleidoscopic journey to all 24 time zones, one for each fifteen degrees. The journey follows the circle of fifths from C major through the flat keys, and when the geographical odyssey crosses the date line, we move musically from 6 flats to 6 sharps.

## **Combining performance and composition**

Following in the footsteps of great masters of the violin, such as Fritz Kreisler and Eugène Ysaÿe, Henning Kraggerud's approach enables the performative and creative processes to develop hand in hand. In Equinox, Kraggerud has written beautiful, mournful, bubbly and heartbreaking music, organized into four violin concertos entitled Afternoon, Evening, Night and Morning. Kraggerud performs regularly with eminent conductors such as Denève, Saraste, Dausgaard, Vänskä, McCreesh, and McGegan, to name a few. A dedicated chamber musician, he performs frequently on both violin and viola in venues such as London's Wigmore Hall, appearing alongside artists including Imogen Cooper, Adrian Brendel, Steven Isserlis, Joshua Bell, Martha Argerich, Leif Ove Andsnes, and Piotr Anderszewski. Kraggerud plays a 1744 Guerneri del Gesù, provided by Dextra Musica.

## **The Arctic Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra**

Equinox is commissioned for and beautifully performed by the Arctic Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra, of which Kraggerud has been the artistic director since 2012. Equinox was first premiered during the Nordlysfestivalen in 2014, and received excellent reviews. The Risør Chamber Music Festival sees a new performance this summer, with Gaarder himself as the narrator.

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"– The playing of the Arctic Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra is excellent. The Arctic Philharmonic is the world's youngest (founded 2009) and northernmost orchestra, based well north of the Arctic Circle. Henning Kraggerud's capacity as a violinist is well-known by now – I first heard him almost twenty years ago – and it is nice to encounter him now as conductor and composer. Equinox is a fascinating composition to return to over and over again.  
[Göran Forsling / musicweb-international.com]"

"– They are full of tunes, expertly written for their instrument and clearly drawing on Kraggerud's accomplishment in impro and jazz while behaving more like the incidental music to a film or TV series that they are crying out to accompany. Their composer plays with the kind of engaging clarity that has served him well in Grieg and Sinding, and he is promptly partnered in a fairly reverberant church acoustic by the Arctic Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra. [4/5 Peter Quantril / Amati Magazine]"



"- Kraggeruds personlige stemme er kosmopolitisk, ikke spesielt norsk i mine ører, og han henfaller heller ikke til overfladisk tonemaleri av byer og steder han har besøkt: Hans verk krever det ikke, men klarer gjennom sine 54 minutter å holde like mye på oppmerksomheten som Vivaldis fire årstider gjør. [Guy Rickards / Klassisk Musikkmagasin]"



"– Kraggerud's playing is evocative and the Arctic Philharmonic provide a warm, capable cushion underneath him.  
[Andrew Mellor / Gramophone]"

"– Kraggerud sticks firmly to a lysh, late-Romantic idiom and delivers a beautifully clean, superbly articulated performance of his self-composed solo line throughout, full of character and wit. He has excellent, incisive support from the Tromsø-based Arctic Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra [David Kettle / The Strad]"

"– Wearing three hats as composer, soloist and conductor, Henning Kraggerud delivers stunning performances in keeping with his reputation as one of today's finest violinists. He also gets superb playing from the Arctic Philharmonic"