

## Bjørn Morten Christophersen: Woven Brass

This album is spun out of the musical friendship between Christophersen and Haltli, and features whirling overtone spectra, virtuosic gestures, beautiful melodic ambiguity and quiet spaces – musical moments and extended structures – all woven together into an hour-long musical narrative. Bjørn Morten Christophersen is continually in pursuit of new musical stories. Whether writing for choir, orchestra, chamber ensembles or TV drama, a clear voice always carries the narrative. The six musicians gathered for this recording are all members of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, and they play together in the ensemble Norwegian Brass Expo. They are among the best and most experienced brass players in Scandinavia and come from a Nordic brass tradition advocating a homogenous and beautiful sound.

## Oslo Philharmonic Brass

Bjørn Morten Christophersen  
Woven Brass

Oslo Philharmonic Brass

Recorded in DXD 24bit/352.8kHz

■ 5.1 DTS HD MA 24/192kHz ■ 9.1 Dolby Atmos 48kHz

■ 2.0 LPCM 24/192kHz ■ 9.1 Auro-3D 96kHz

+ mShuttle MP3 and MQA



2L<sup>143</sup>

EAN13: 7041888523420

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AURO  
PULSE

DOLBY ATMOS

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- 1 The Wind Blows Where it Desires 9:35
- 2 A Brass Chat 2:03
- 3 Passing Scherzo 0:33
- 4 Air 1:56
- 5 Sliding March 1:11
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- 11 Octatonic Song 3:09
- 12 Intersubject 1:08
- 13 Chaconne 7:14
- 14 Woven Brass Quintet 13:51

**track 1 trumpet trio** Jonas Haltia, Axel Sjøstedt and Brynjar Kolbergstrud

**track 2, 4, 6, 10, 11 brass trio** Jonas Haltia, Jan-Olav Martinsen and Thorbjørn Lønmo

**track 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14 brass quintet** Jonas Haltia, Axel Sjøstedt,

Jan-Olav Martinsen, Thorbjørn Lønmo and Frode Amundsen

**track 13 solo trumpet** Jonas Haltia



***Woven Brass***, to sum up in brief, consists of fourteen individual pieces for brass instruments in a variety of styles written over a period of a decade and a half, woven into a single work with overlapping musical material. Digital streaming services have led to new ways of consuming music: While some zap and shuffle music online, others still consider an album a complete work to listen to from beginning to end. *Woven Brass* is an attempt to cater for both modes of listening: There are musical aphorisms just half a minute long, works lasting up to fourteen minutes, and an overall conception of the album as a single, unified work in which all the elements are woven together into an hour-long musical narrative.

A work may be identified by its musical material. I have attempted to play around with our perception of the individual pieces' identity and their musical boundaries. The music on this recording uses musical melodic building blocks in the traditional sense; to me they create a feeling of closeness and physical presence. Nonetheless, it is the way in which the musical ideas interact that gives the music life and builds up an extended narrative.

The seed that became *Woven Brass* was a chance encounter I had with Jonas Haltia in 2003. At that time Jonas was already an experienced trumpet player and a member of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, while I

was studying film composition in London. I had been asked to play the organ for my older brother's wedding. He and his fiancée had full control of every detail; they wanted trumpet music in the church, and had contacted Jonas. So I decided to give them a surprise on the day – a specially written piece for trumpet and organ. Nobody had heard it until we rehearsed an hour before the ceremony. Jonas loved the piece, and a few months later he recorded it under the title *Sentimental Pebbles* with organist Inger-Lise Ulsrud, who incidentally had been my organ teacher. This piece has been living a life of its own since then. I have included it on *Woven Brass* in an arrangement for brass quintet, where it acts as a moment of repose halfway through the narrative.

Following *Sentimental Pebbles*, Jonas commissioned music for brass trio and I produced *Seven Bagatelles* with some inspiration from Ligeti's *Six Bagatelles for Wind Quintet*. Jonas Haltia, Jan-Olav Martinsen and Thorbjørn Lønmo performed my bagatelles at Oslo's National Theatre as part of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra's chamber music series in 2005, after which I put the pieces to one side. Ten years later I decided to discard three of them, but held on to two motifs that had been crawling around in my head since the performance in 2005. I took the motifs from their original context and used them as a basis for a new piece, *Ohrwurmer Fantasie*, which is very different in style from the two redundant bagatelles. And so I now had a set of five bagatelles: *Ohrwurmer Fantasie* plus the four surviving pieces which I called *A Brass Chat*, *Air*, *Circo Dodecafonico*, and *Octatonic Song*.

From 2005 I mainly wrote music for drama series for Norwegian television (NRK), choral music and orchestral arrangements, and the oratorio *The Lapse of Time* based on Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*. In addition I taught arranging and composition at the University of Oslo and wrote my doctoral thesis on compositional techniques in the sketches of Johan Svendsen.

In 2013 Jonas commissioned me to write a trumpet trio. *The Wind Blows Where it Desires* is an ambitious and virtuosic large-scale work, inspired in part by Sofia Gubaidulina's

piece for the same forces. The title of my work comes from St John's gospel, chapter 3 v. 8, although I encountered it in Stravinsky's published lecture series *Poetics of Music*, in which it is used as an image of inspiration. My work experiments with different melody-based textures: After the opening theme has been presented, the three trumpets pursue a common melodic line, which creates melodic ambiguity and whirling overtone spectra. Midway I make a reference to the trumpet's past as a natural instrument, i.e. all the melodic material is based on the overtone series. Here, differently tuned overtone series overlap to create asynchronous rhythmic and harmonic textures. The wah-wah mute makes an appearance creating a variety of sounds and effects. And the diatonic opening theme gradually appears through the overtone-based motifs. Throughout the piece, the three parts follow each other closely. Instead of contrasting one another, they illuminate the material from three slightly different angles. The Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra's trumpet players Jonas Haltia, Axel Sjøstedt and Brynjar Kolbergsrud demonstrate their outstanding ensemble in this demanding, complex work.

*Chaconne* for solo trumpet is dedicated to Jonas Haltia. It is a virtuosic work in which I experiment with the point of intersection between monophony and polyphony. Parts of passages are played into a hat. This creates a muffled, distanced sound in dialogue with the open, present sound of the instrument. And gradually the chaconne theme itself becomes apparent.

For the quintets, the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra's tuba player Frode Amundsen joins the team. *Five short pieces for Brass Quintet* consists of five individual pieces based on material from the bagatelles, *Sentimental Pebbles*, and *The Wind Blows Where it Desires*. At the same time, they form a point of departure for the larger piece *Woven Brass Quintet* in which the various strands are – perhaps – finally brought together.

Bjørn Morten Christophersen, 2017



Fjorten enkeltstående brasstykker i forskjellige stilarter, skrevet over en periode på halvannet tiår, men som likevel er vevet sammen av overlappende musikalsk materiale til ett større verk – det er albumet *Woven Brass* kort oppsummert. Med digitale strømmetjenester kommer nye lyttevaner: Mens noen zapper og shuffler musikk på nettet, betrakter andre fremdeles albumet som et enhetlig verk man lytter gjennom fra begynnelse til slutt. Woven Brass forsøker å imøtekomme begge lyttemåter. Her finnes musikalske spørsmål på 30 sekunder, verker på opptil 14 minutter og altså én større helhet der alt er vevet sammen i en timelang musikalsk fortelling.

Et verk identifiseres blant annet gjennom sitt musikalske materiale. Jeg forsøker å leke litt med opplevelsen av stykkenes identitet og avgrensning. Musikken på denne platen gjør i høy grad bruk av melodiske byggeklosser i tradisjonell forstand. For meg skaper det nærhet, sangbarhet og kroppslighet. Likevel er det måten de melodiske ideene virker sammen på som gjør musikken her levende og som skaper et lengre musikalsk narrativ.

Spiren til *Woven Brass* var et tilfeldig møte mellom Jonas Haltia og meg i 2003. På det tidspunktet var han allerede en erfaren trompetist i Oslo-Filharmonien, mens jeg studerte filmkomposisjon i London. Så skulle jeg være organist i min storebrors bryllup i Oslo. Brudeparet hadde full kontroll på alle detaljer. De ville blant



annet ha trompetmusikk i vielsen, og fikk tak i Jonas. Derfor laget jeg en overraskelse for anledningen – et nyskrevet stykke for trompet og orgel. Ingen hadde hørt det før vi øvde gjennom en time på forhånd. Jonas falt for melodien, og noen måneder senere spilte han den inn under navnet *Sentimental Pebbles* med organist Inger-Lise Ulrud, som tilfeldigvis var min tidligere orgellærer. Stykket lever for lengst sitt eget liv. Jeg har også tatt det med på *Woven Brass* i et arrangement for messingkvintett. Her står den som et slags hvilepunkt midtveis i fortellingen.

Etter *Sentimental Pebbles* bestilte Jonas musikk for messingtrio, og jeg kvitterte med *Syv Bagateller*, dels inspirert av Ligetis *Seks Bagateller* for blåsekvintett. Som en del av Oslo-Filharmoniens kammermusikkserie urframførte Jonas Haltia, Jan-Olav Martinsen og Thorbjørn Lønmo mine bagateller på Nationalteatret i Oslo i 2005. Deretter ble bagatellene liggende. Ti år senere vraket jeg tre av dem, men tok vare på to motiver som hadde kravlet omkring i ørene mine siden urframføringen. Jeg tok nå disse motivene helt ut av sin opprinnelige sammenheng og baserte heller et nytt stykke på dem, *Ohrwurmer Fantasie*, som i stil og uttrykk er veldig ulikt de to begravede bagatellene. Dermed ble det et sett på fem bagateller: *Ohrwurmer Fantasie* pluss de fire overlevende som jeg ga titlene: *A Brass Chat*, *Air*, *Circo Dodecafonico* og *Octatonic Song*.

Fra 2005 skrev jeg i hovedsak musikk til dramaserier for NRK, kormusikk og orkesterarrangementer, samt oratoriet *The Lapse of Time* over Darwins *On the Origin of Species*. I tillegg underviste jeg i arrangering og komposisjon ved Institutt for musikkvitenskap, Universitetet i Oslo, der jeg også skrev en doktorgradsavhandling om skissteknikkene til komponisten Johan Svendsen.

I 2013 bestilte så Jonas en trompettrio. *Ånden blåser hvor den vil* er et ambisiøst, virtuost og stort anlagt verk, dels inspirert av Sofia Gubaidulinas verk for samme besetning. Min tittel stammer egentlig fra Johannesevangeliet 3.8, skjønt jeg plukket den opp i Stravinskys publiserte forelesningsserie *Poetics of Music*, der sitatet brukes som et bilde på inspirasjon. Verket eksperimenterer med ulike melodibaserte teksturer: Etter at åpningstemaet er presentert, jakter de tre trompetene på en felles linje, noe som skaper melodisk utyelighet og et virvlende overtonespekter. Midtveis i verket spiller jeg på trompetens historie som naturtoneinstrument, det vil si at all melodikk er basert på overtonerekka. Jeg setter ulikt stemte overtonerekker opp mot hverandre i asynkrone rytmiske og harmoniske teksturer. Her bruker jeg også wa-wa-muten for å skape forskjellige klanger og effekter. Blant annet trer det diatoniske åpningstemaet etter hvert fram fra de overtonebaserte gestene. Gjennom hele stykket følger stemmene hverandre tett. I stedet for å kontrastere hverandre belyser de materialet fra tre litt forskjellige vinkler. Oslo-Filharmoniens trompetrekke Jonas Haltia, Axel Sjøstedt og Brynjar Kolbergsrud viser her sitt fremragende samspill gjennom et krevende og sammensatt verk.

*Chaconne* for solotrompet er tilegnet Jonas Haltia. Det er et virtuost verk som eksperimenterer i skjæringsfeltet mellom monofoni og polyfoni. Deler av fraser spilles inn i en hatt. Dette skaper en dempet og mer distansert klang i dialog med den åpne, nære trompettonen. Gradvis kommer også det egentlige chaconne-temaet til syne.

I kvintettene kommer Oslo-Filharmoniens tubaista Frode Amundsen med på laget. *Fem korte stykker for messingkvintett* er alle selvstendige stykker selv om de er basert på materiale fra bagatellene, *Sentimental Pebbles* og *Ånden blåser hvor den vil*. Samtidig danner de utgangspunktet for den store *Woven Brass Quintet* hvor trådene – kanskje – samles til slutt.

*Bjørn Morten Christophersen, 2017*

**Bjørn Morten Christophersen** (1976) søker alltid etter musikalske fortellinger. Om mediet er kor, orkester, kammerensemble eller TV-drama er han på jakt etter en klar fortellerstemme. Musikken hans er framført i Skandinavia, Tyskland og USA og spilt inn på flere plater. Han har jobbet med flere av Norges ledende kor og orkestere og skrevet en mengde orkesterarrangementer. Til daglig er han førstelektor i komposisjon og arrangering ved Universitetet i Oslo. Partitur og stemmesett på alle stykkene på denne platen er publisert på Norsk musikforlag.

Alle de seks musikerne som ble samlet til denne innspillingen er fast ansatte i **Oslo-Filharmonien** og spiller sammen i Norwegian Brass Expo. De er blant Skandinavias beste og mest erfarne messingblåsere og har alle vokst opp med den nordiske messingtradisjonen med sitt homogene og vakre klangideal.

**Woven Brass** spinner ut av et musikalsk vennskapet mellom Christophersen og Haltia i form av virvlende overtonespekter, virtuose krumspring, vakker melodisk tvetydighet og absolutt stillstand, som musikalske øyeblikk og større strukturer – vevet sammen til en timelang musikalsk fortelling.



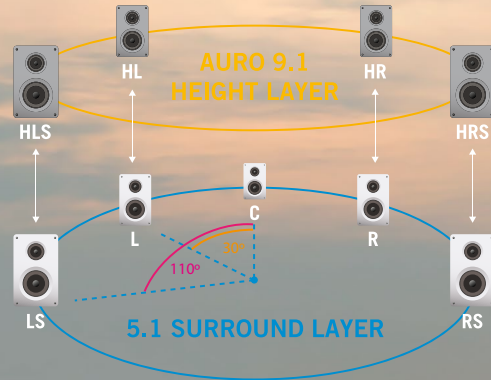
Scores and parts for all works on this album is published by Norsk Musikforlag

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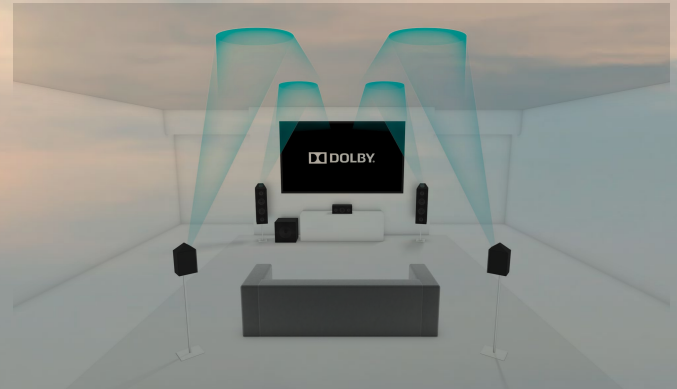
Auro 9.1 not only delivers an entirely new audio experience in 3D but also offers the most efficient 5.1 Surround format compatible speaker layout featuring the 'Height' dimension.



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





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*Mårten Lindberg* balance engineer and recording producer

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Blu-ray authoring **msm studio group**

Screen design and Blu-ray authoring **Michael Thomas Hoffmann**  
Blu-ray producers **Morten Lindberg** and **Stefan Bock**

## Recorded in Jar Church, Norway June 2017 by Lindberg Lyd AS

Recording Producer and Balance Engineer **MORTEN LINDBERG**  
Recording Technician **GJERMUND SKOG**

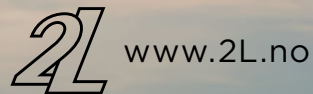
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Executive Producers  
**JØRN SIMENSTAD, BJØRN MORTEN CHRISTOPHERSEN and MORTEN LINDBERG**

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