

EUROPEAN TOUR

It is common to date the beginning of the Renaissance to the mid-14th century. From the ashes of the Black Death emerged a society that was fundamentally changed, and to a large extent saw itself as re-born – formed anew. It cannot be a coincidence that this transformation first took place in the very parts of Europe that had been at the centre of the Roman Empire when at its strongest, in Italy. Florence became the main powerhouse of the new Europe, and from there the Renaissance spread rapidly, bringing an intense cultural flowering to France, England, the Netherlands, Germany and Spain. It is from these countries that Nordic Brass Ensemble has assembled the repertoire for “European Tour” – music arranged specially for this ensemble. Modern brass instruments have a history going back to the Janissaries, the Ottoman sultan’s special military corps. Contact between Renaissance Europe and Islamic culture helped determine how European culture, and in particular its music, would develop in this period. Nordic Brass Ensemble is made up of musicians from symphony orchestras and wind ensembles in the Nordic countries.

Nordic Brass Ensemble

Recorded in DXD 24bit/352.8kHz

■ 5.1 DTS HD MA 24/192kHz ■ 2.0 LPCM 24/192kHz

+ mS Shuttle MP3 and MQA

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DIGITAL AUDIO

2L¹²⁸

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Nordic Brass Ensemble EUROPEAN TOUR



Suite "European Tour"

- 1 Mundus et Musica et Totus Concentus (Bartolomé Ramos de Pareja) 1:21
- 2 Dit le Bourguignon (traditional) 1:14
- 3 Danza Alta sobre "la Spagna" (Francisco de la Torre) 1:10
- 4 Hopper Dancz "Routi Bouilli" (Johann Weck) 1:08

- 5 **Battalla de Morales** (Francisco Correa de Arauxo) 5:17

- 6 **Pie Jesu Domine** (Cristóbal de Morales) 1:36

Suite "Terpsichore" (Michael Praetorius)

- 7 Intro & Gavotte 3:00
- 8 Bransle gay semel 1:32
- 9 Galliard 1:30
- 10 Ballet 1:30
- 11 Bransle gay 1:37
- 12 Ballet du Roy 2:49
- 13 Volte 1:00

- 14 **Tristis est anima mea** (Carlo Gesualdo) 4:55

Music from the court of Christian IV (Mogens Pedersøn / John Dowland)

- 15 Ecco La Primavera 1:44
- 16 Flow My Tears 2:09
- 17 The King of Denmark's Galliard 2:18

- 18 **Circumdede me runt** (Cristóbal de Morales) 1:54

- 19 **Pavane la Battaglia** (Tielman Susato) 2:09

- 20 **Jerigonza** (Mateo Flecha) 2:07

Holborne Suite (Anthony Holborne)

- 21 Nightwatch 2:06
- 22 Lullabie 2:19
- 23 Almaine 1:43
- 24 The Funerals 2:11
- 25 The Fairie Round 1:15

- 26 **Dolcissima mia vita** (Carlo Gesualdo) 2:29

Music from the court of Louis XIII (André Danican Philidor)

- 27 Musique de l'enfance du Dauphin 6:12
- 28 Libertas 1:53
- 29 Musique pour le Sacre de Roy 3:03

- 30 **Revecy Venir du Printans** (Claude Le Jeune) 3:49

- 31 **La Battaglia** (Adriano Banchieri) 1:59

- 32 **Susato Suite** (Tielman Susato) 4:24

Track 1-3, 7-17, 26 and 30-31 arranged by Hans Petter Stangnes
Track 5-6, 18-25, 27-29, and 32 arranged by Stian Aareskjold
Track 4 arranged by Erik Eilertsen

A new period of growth

In the Late Middle Ages Europe was a part of the world that was undergoing dramatic changes. Wars, outbreaks of plague, political upheavals and at times bloody encounters with other cultures had once and for all torn up a social structure and a way of thinking inherited from the period of the Roman Empire. The two pillars of society – secular leadership and the church – were being challenged again and again. The crusades, during which church leaders had for several generations attempted to buttress their political power by whipping up popular religious extremism, had cost Europe dear, with disastrous losses of life and territory.

The first major collisions between the old Roman imperial concepts and the new expanding cultures moving ever closer from the east – first and foremost Islam – challenged Europe's image of itself and changed it in a way no one could have foreseen.

The Black Death, that terrible bubonic pandemic that killed about 60% of Europe's population between 1347 and 1351, originated as far as we can detect in an earlier outbreak of plague in China in 1331. Plague also ravaged southeastern India in 1344 and Mongolia in 1346, and it is likely that it was from these areas that it spread to Europe. The rapidity of its spread was made possible by the total ignorance at the time of the role of hygiene in stopping the transmission of disease.

The Black Death was more than just a symbolic sign of the old Europe breaking away from its past: in addition to the devastating scale of this human tragedy, the pandemic paralysed just about all existing social and traditional practices, principles and norms. From the ashes of this disaster rose a society that was fundamentally changed, and which to a large extent saw itself as re-born – formed anew. It cannot be a coincidence that this transformation first took place in the very parts of Europe that had been at the centre of the Roman Empire when at its strongest, in Italy

It is common to date the beginning of the Renaissance (the French word for re-birth) to the mid-14th century, and to Petrarch's collection of poems "Canzoniere" in particular. Florence, which at the time, thanks to its close contact with trading routes and other cultures, and especially those – both new and old – in the East, was a rich and growing trading town and centre of industry, and it was Florence that developed into the main powerhouse of the new Europe. A revolutionary way of thinking was to transform art, architecture and philosophy. The individual was placed much closer to the centre of how people thought and what they thought about. This had a powerful impact on art as an expression of people's thoughts, with its own autonomous value. Medieval literature had for the most part had religious themes, but now it was increasingly replaced by a distinct secular literature centred on politics and philosophy. In sculpture, Gothic figures of saints staring fixedly at heaven gave way to living, plastic and above all realistic sculptures based on painstaking and objective examinations of human anatomy. There was an increasing pride in specialist professionalism and expertise, and enquiring minds asked new questions and moved in fresh directions – in art this is seen in the works of strongly individual artists like Michelangelo and da Vinci.

The Renaissance spread rapidly from Florence to other parts of Europe – France, England, Germany, Poland and Hungary experienced an intense cultural flowering in the period prior to the Ottoman attack of 1526. Scandinavia was a late participant in this cultural movement – indeed in Scandinavia it was the Reformation in the 1530s that would bring people into contact with the new ideas and new ways of thinking. The split in Christian Europe caused by the Reformation brought with it a new religious fanaticism which was to replace the harmony of the age of the Renaissance with the violent energy and drama of the Baroque age at the end of the 16th century.

Janissaries appear for first time in the 14th century Ottoman Empire; they were elite infantry soldiers (the word "infantry", derived from old Italian via French, means a young person, foot soldier) in the service of the Ottoman sultans. Janissaries existed as a permanent unit in the army from 1362, and were disbanded by Sultan Mahmud II as late as 1826. The early

Janissary divisions consisted for the most part of young Christian prisoners of war, but they later developed into the Ottoman Empire's first professional army. Right from the start they had their own uniform and marched to special music played by the meherân, a type of army band that still exists in Istanbul. In other words, Janissaries were trained both as soldiers and as musicians, and in this way formed a bridge between the artistic worlds of two huge and different cultures.

Renaissance Europeans, then, whether they liked it or not, were brought into contact with Islamic culture through Janissary music, a form of military music. This encounter was to play a vital role in shaping the way forward for western music in the Renaissance. The music of the Italian and German Renaissance was to become famous for its use of wind instruments like the cornett and sackbut, and in most centres of court life, both ecclesiastical and secular, one could always find outstanding performers of, and composers for, these groups of instruments, both of which are among the forerunners of modern brass instruments.

One particular very popular secular music style emerged as a result of these domestic and foreign impulses – the battaglia style. The word “battaglia” is Italian, literally meaning battle, and music in this genre should indeed “describe” battle scenes mimetically with repeated fanfare flourishes, sonic imitations of weapons firing, and even – especially in vocal music – the shouts and screams of the combatants. There were both instrumental and vocal forms of these battle pieces, and compositions that contained both, often with passionate recitations included as an extra, were not uncommon. Such music was considered important for building up morale and esprit de corps, for then as now it was edifying for a country's citizens to bathe in the reflected glory of important political and military triumphs!

Wind instruments, and above all brass instruments, played an important role in the contemporary military and civilian world, both as signalling devices and as regular musical “hardware”, so it is in no way surprising that different historical battle scenarios were kept alive artistically in the public memory through the use of precisely these instruments.

This tradition of composing musical renditions of military battles was continued in the centuries that followed, and has given us such works as Beethoven's “Wellington's Victory”, Tchaikovsky's “1812 Overture” and Shostakovich's “Leningrad Symphony”. Battaglia music is, in other words, a genre of seriously composed programme music that has maintained its entertainment and morale boosting relevance for nearly 600 years.

The **Nordic Brass Ensemble** was founded in 1993 by a group of brass musicians who shared a strong desire to make chamber music together. From the start, the ensemble has focused on developing its own musical ideas and concepts of sound. By exploiting the different instruments' special qualities and combining them in new and unusual ways, and by extensively using mutes, percussion and, indeed, unfamiliar instruments to create new colours and effects, the ensemble is continuously shaping its distinct sound.

The Nordic Brass Ensemble has a vast repertoire, spanning from Renaissance music to music of our own time. Early music has been an important part of its repertoire since the start, and this is reflected on this album, which consists mainly of Renaissance music. However, it also features some pieces that point towards the baroque era – the focus of the ensemble's next recording. All the music on this release has been arranged exclusively for the NBE by Hans Petter Stangnes and Stian Aareskjold.

The musicians live in different parts of Scandinavia, and meet for projects about twice a year. The ensemble performs regularly in the Nordic countries, and has in recent years also visited Germany, Italy, Austria, Spain and Bolivia.



En ny blomstringstid

Europa mot slutten av Middelalderen var en verdensdel i dramatisk forandring. Kriger, pest-epidemier, politiske omveltninger og til dels blodige møter med andre kulturer hadde en gang for alle revet opp en samfunnsstruktur og et tenkesett nedarvet fra romertiden. De viktigste statsbærende strukturene i samfunnet, den verdslige ledelsen og Kirken, måtte tåle å bli utfordret gang på gang. Korstogstiden, der flere generasjoner med kirkelige ledere hadde søkt å sementere sin politiske makt gjennom å hisse opp folkemengdene til en religiøs ekstremisme, hadde kommet Europa dyrt å stå, gjennom et grotesk tap av både menneskelig og areal.

De første store kollisjoner mellom det gamle romerske imperie-tankegodset og de nye, ekspanderende kulturene østfra – først og fremst de islamske – utfordret Vestens selvilde og endret det på en måte ingen hadde kunnet forestille seg.

Svartedauden, den fryktede byllepesten som drepte henimot 60% av befolkningen i Europa mellom 1347 og 1351, stammer etter alt å dømme fra et tidligere pest-utbrudd i Kina i 1331. Det var også pest-utbrudd i det sørøstlige India i 1344 og i Mongolia i 1346, mulige forløpere for den store pesten i Europa noen år senere. At epidemien kunne spre seg så raskt som den gjorde skyldtes et fullstendig fraværende begrep om hygienens betydning for smitte.

Pesten skulle i mer enn bare symbolsk forstand bli Det gamle Europas farvel med historien: I tillegg til de enorme menneskelige tragediene, medførte epidemiene en nullstilling av så godt som alle samfunnsmessige og hevdivunne prosesser, prinsipper og normer. Det samfunnet som etter hvert reiste seg av asken ble grunnleggende nytt fra innerst til ytterst og så seg selv langt på vei som «gjennfødt» – nydannet. Typisk nok skjedde dette først i de deler av Europa som også hadde vært sentrum for Romerrikets storhetstid – i Italia.

Det er vanlig å tidfeste Renessansens begynnelse (Renaissance – fransk for gjenfødelse) til tidlig på 1350-tallet, og som startskuddet regnes gjerne utgivelsen av Petrarcas diktsamling

Canzoniere. Firenze, på denne tiden en rik og fremgangsrik handels- og industriby på grunn av sin tette kontakt med blant annet Orientens nye og gamle kulturer, skulle bli det nye Europas kraftsentrum. En gjennomgripende ny måte å tenke på skulle besjele kunst, arkitektur og filosofi – Mennesket fikk en langt mer sentral plass i tenkningen, noe som banet veien for kunsten som en menneskelig uttrykksform med egenverdi. Middelalderens litteratur hadde i det store og hele hatt religiøse temaer, mens det nå begynte å vokse frem en egen verdslig litteratur basert på politikk og filosofi. De gotiske helgenskulpturene med sine stive himmelvendte blikk ble nå erstattet med levende, plastiske, og fremfor alt realistiske skulpturer basert på inngående og fordomsfrie studier av menneskelig anatomi. Det vokste på rekordtid frem profesjoner med stor grad av yrkes stolthet – i kunsten viser dette seg i arbeidene til sterkt individuelle kunstnere som Michelangelo og da Vinci.

Fra Firenze spredte Renessansen seg raskt til andre deler av Europa – både Frankrike, England, Tyskland, Polen og Ungarn opplevde intens kulturell blomstring i tiden før det osmanske angrepet i 1526. Norden kom sent med i bevegelsen – her var det Reformasjonen på 1530-tallet som skulle bringe folk i kontakt med det nye tankegodset. Splittelsen i det kristne Europa som Reformasjonen medførte, ledet i sin tur til en ny religiøs fanatisme som skulle erstatte Renessansens harmoni med Barokkens voldsomme energi og drama på slutten av 1500-tallet.

Janitsjarene dukker for første gang opp i 1300-tallets historiske osmanske rike og var elite infanterisoldater (infanterie: fransk fra gammel-italiensk "infanteria"; ungdom, fotsoldat) i tjeneste hos de osmanske sultanene. Janitsjarene eksisterte som en fast avdeling i hæren fra 1362 og ble oppløst av sultan Mahmud II så sent som i 1826. Janitsjaravdelingene besto i den første fasen stort sett av unge kristne krigsfanger, men ble etter hvert til det osmanske rikets første profesjonelle hær. De fikk helt fra den første tiden egne uniformer og marsjerte til sin spesielle musikk spilt av mehterân, en type militærkorps som fortsatt eksisterer i Istanbul. De ble med andre ord skolert både som soldater og som musikere, og kom på denne måten til å bli bindeleddet mellom to store og ulike kulturers artistiske uttrykk.

Renessansens europeere kom altså, enten de ville eller ikke, gjennom janitsjarmusikk – et militært musikkfenomen – i kontakt med islamsk kultur. Dette skulle i stor grad bestemme den videre veien også for den vestlige musikken i Renessansen. Den italienske og tyske Renessansen ble etter hvert berømt nettopp for sin bruk av blåseinstrumenter som cornetto og sackbut, og ved så vel kirkelige som verdslige hoff fantes det alltid fremragende utøvere og komponister for disse instrumentgruppene, som begge er blant de moderne messinginstrumentenes forfedre.

En særegen verdslig og meget populær renessansemusikkstil utviklet seg som et resultat av alle disse indre og ytre påvirkningskildene – battaglia-stilen. Battaglia er italiensk og betyr ordrett slag eller kamp, og musikkstykker komponert i denne stilen skulle illudere slagscener gjennom feiende flotte fanfarer, våpenrabalder, og noen ganger – særlig i de vokale komposisjonene – rop og skrik fra kamphandlingene. Det fantes både instrumentale og vokale former for battaglia-musikk, og komposisjoner som inneholdt begge deler, gjerne med lidenskapelige resitasjonspartier innimellom, var heller ikke uvanlige. Slike verker var viktige for den allmenne moral – det var den gang som nå oppbyggelig for et lands borgere å kunne sole seg i viktige politiske og militære seire!

Blåseinstrumentene, og i særlig grad messinginstrumentene – hadde en sentral plass i tidens militære og sivile maktstrukturer både som signalinstrumenter og regulære musikkverktøy, så det er naturlig at ulike historiske kampscenarier ble fastholdt kunstnerisk for etterslekten ved hjelp av nettopp disse instrumentene. Tradisjonen med å komponere slike musikalske gjengivelser av militære konfrontasjoner holdt seg opp igjennom århundrene som fulgte, og har blant mye annet gitt oss verker som Beethovens «Wellingtons Seier», Tsjajkovskys «1812-ouvertyre» og Sjostakovitsj' «Leningradsymfoni». Battaglia-musikk er med andre ord en form for gjennomkomponert programmusikk som har beholdt sin aktualitet som underholdnings- og påvirkningsverktøy gjennom snart 600 år.

Nordisk Brass Ensemble ble startet i 1993 av en gruppe messingblåsere som hadde et brennende ønske om å få spille kammermusikk sammen. NBE har siden starten hatt fokus på å utvikle sine egne klanglige og musikalske ideer. Dette viser seg for eksempel i hvordan de bevisst utnytter de forskjellige instrumentenes egenart og setter instrumentene opp mot hverandre i uvante kombinasjoner. Sammen med kreativ bruk av sordiner og slagverk skapes nye klangfarger som er med på å understreke ensemblets egenartede klang.

NBE har gjennom årene bygd opp et bredt repertoar som spenner fra renessansemusikk til musikk fra vår egen tid. Tidligmusikk har alltid vært en viktig del av ensemblets repertoar. Denne utgivelsen inneholder hovedsakelig renessansemusikk samt noen verk som peker frem mot barokken, som blir fokus for NBEs neste innspilling. All musikken er arrangert for dette ensemblet av Hans Petter Stangnes og Stian Aareskjold.

Ensemblets musikere bor spredt rundt i hele Skandinavia, og møtes for prosjekter ca. to ganger i året. NBE spiller jevnlig i våre nordiske land. De siste årene har ensemblet også besøkt Tyskland, Italia, Østerrike, Spania og Bolivia.





Trumpets

Hans Petter Stangnes (N) Trondheim Symphony Orchestra
Jon Behncke (N) Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra
Brynjar Kolbergsrud (N) Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra
Stian Aareskjold (N) The Norwegian Wind Ensemble

Horn

Rune Brodahl (N) The Norwegian National Opera Orchestra

Trombones

Geir Anfinen (N) Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra
Niklas Almgren (S) Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra
Petter Winroth (S) Norwegian Radio Orchestra
Jens-Kristian Sogaard (DK) Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra

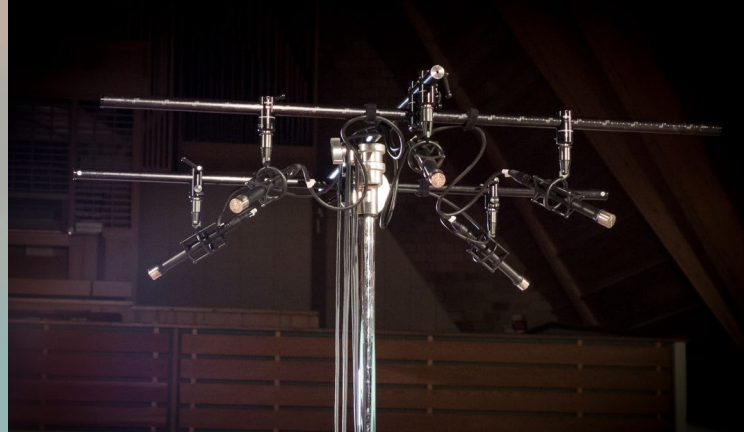
Tuba / cimbasso

Morten Agerup (N) Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra

Percussion / timpani

Heming Valebjørg (N) Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra





2L (Lindberg Lyd) records in spacious acoustic venues; large concert halls, churches and cathedrals. This is actually where we can make the most intimate recordings. The qualities we seek in large rooms are not necessarily a big reverb, but openness due to the absence of close reflecting walls. Making an ambient and beautiful recording is the way of least resistance. Searching the fine edge between direct contact and openness; that's the real challenge! A really good recording should be able to bodily move the listener. This core quality of audio production is made by choosing the right venue for the repertoire, and balancing the image in the placement of microphones and musicians relative to each other in that venue. There is no method available today to reproduce the exact perception of attending a live performance. That leaves us with the art of illusion when it comes to recording music. As recording engineers and producers we need to do exactly the same as any good musician; interpret the music and the composer's intentions and adapt to the media where we perform.

Immersive Sound is a completely new conception of the musical experience. Recorded music is no longer a matter of a fixed one-dimensional setting, but rather of a three-dimensional enveloping situation. Stereo can be described as a flat canvas and surround sound as a field, but 3D immersive sound is a sculpture that you can literally move around and relate to spatially; surrounded by music you can move about in the aural space and choose angles, vantage points and positions.

Blu-ray is the first domestic format in history that unites theatre movies and music sound in equally high quality. The musical advantage is the high resolution for audio, and the convenience for the audience as one single player will handle music, films, DVD-collection and your old library of traditional CD.

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■ 5.1 DTS HD MA 24/192kHz ■ 2.0 LPCM 24/192kHz

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3. Open the Internet browser of your computer and type in the IP address of your BD player. You will find this address in the setup menu of your Blu-ray Disc player.
4. Select booklet and audio files to download from the Blu-ray to your computer.



Blu-ray authoring **msm studio group**
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This recording was made by Lindberg Lyd AS with DPA microphones and HORUS converters to a PYRAMIX workstation. Digital eXtreme Definition is a professional audio format that brings analogue qualities in 24 bit at 352.8 kHz sampling rate.

Note on Low Frequency Effect channel: For SACD and FLAC audio files, all six channels (including the Lfe channel) are calibrated for equal playback levels. However, in the audio streams for the Blu-ray the Lfe channel is lowered by -10dB in the mastering process, anticipating a +10dB elevation in cinema-style home theatre playback.

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- 1-4 Pareja/Torre/Weck **European Tour**
- 5 Arauxo **Battalla de Morales**
- 6 Morales **Pie Jesu Domine**
- 7-13 Praetorius **Suite Terpsichore**
- 14 Gesualdo **Tristis est anima mea**
- 15-17 Pedersøn/Dowland **Christian IV**
- 18 Morales **Circumdede me runt**
- 19 Susato **Pavane la Battaglia**
- 20 Flecha **Jerigonza**
- 21-25 Holborne **Suite**
- 26 Gesualdo **Dolcissima mia vita**
- 27-29 Philidor **Louis XIII**
- 30 Jeune **Revecy Venir du Printans**
- 31 Banchieri **La Battaglia**
- 32 Susato **Suite**