

The background of the entire image is a detailed, teal-colored illustration of a feather. The feather's structure is composed of numerous fine, parallel lines that curve and fan out, creating a sense of depth and movement. The color is a consistent, vibrant teal or seafoam green. The feather appears to be part of a larger, multi-feathered structure, with several distinct vane sections visible, overlapping and curving in various directions. The overall effect is one of organic complexity and rhythmic pattern.

Niels la Cour

Works for Choir and Organ

Bine Bryndorf
Trinitatis Kantori
Søren Christian Vestergaard

Niels la Cour

Works for Choir and Organ

Bine Bryndorf, organ

Trinitatis Kantori

Søren Christian Vestergaard, conductor

1 **Salige de, der bor i dit hus** (Blessed are they that dwell in thy house) (1985/86)
for mixed choir and organ 5:07

3 Intermezzi for organ (1973-74) 19:43

2 I Introit: Moderato 7:16

3 II Hymn of Praise: Vivo 4:18

4 III Holy Communion: Lento con tranquillità 8:09

Cantio Mariæ (2005)

for mixed choir 10:21

5 Tota pulchra es 2:43

6 Stabat Mater 2:28

7 Regina caeli 5:10

Vesper Organi (2003) 31:11

8 1. Preludio: Moderato 2:42

9 2. Lauda: Intenso e con un poco larghezza 2:32

10 3. Preghiera: Andante cantabile 3:14

11 4. Fuga: Tranquillo fluente 5:44

12 5. Meditazione: Tranquillo 2:38

13 6. Quiète: Tranquillissimo 1:36

14 7. Inno: Allegro 6:14

15 8. Orazione: Lento e recitando 2:52

16 9. Postludio: Moderato 3:39

17 **Den store mester kommer** (The great master is coming) (2001/2006)
for mixed choir 2:00

18 **Vinger** (Wings) (1973)
for women's choir 2:49

19 **Frelseren er mig en hyrde god** (A good shepherd is my Saviour) (2009)
for mixed choir 1:52

TOTAL: 73:03

In 1975, when the 30-year-old **Niels la Cour** travelled to Rome funded by an Arts Council grant, his finely-tuned ears must have picked up echoes of centuries of music in the city's cathedrals.

With him in his luggage, besides his degree in music theory and music history from the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen, la Cour also had a composing career in the making with a growing worklist of piano, chamber and orchestral music. As early as his high school years at the beginning of the 1960s, he played organ and studied with the organ icon Finn Viderø. Afterwards la Cour chose an academic path, first with basic theory of science and music studies at Copenhagen University, later in the classic Academy course as a pupil of the leading figures Finn Høffding, Bjørn Hjelmberg and Svend Westergaard. Later he himself followed in their footsteps as a teacher of music theory for many years at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen. The greatest source of inspiration for the composer la Cour was his studies, first with 'the Danish Messiaen' Leif Kayser, and later with the composers Vieri Tosatti and Armando Renzi in Rome. After his studies in Rome, sacred music gradually began to assume a central position in la Cour's list of works which in subsequent years led to among other things the major works *Missa brevis* (1989), composed as a commission for the Danish National Chamber Choir, and *Fantasia per organo* (1993-94) as well as the major works on this release. Many thousands of Danish choir singers know and love Niels la Cour's motets and hymns, and in 1988 he was honoured with the title 'Choral Composer of the Year'.

It is said that all roads lead to Rome, but when it comes to the sacred music tradition one can add that all its wellsprings flow from Rome. This was where Gregorian chant grew up and this was where Palestrina created a musical treasure at the peak of the Renaissance that both gathered up the strands from the preceding generations and laid the basis for the subsequent classic polyphony. The bearing ideas of the Palestrina style are balance, internal consistency and calm, organic melody and harmony – the musical soul informing the principles behind the great architecture of the cathedrals.

Niels la Cour's choral and organ music flows from this tradition, and it is the perfect ornamentation of the great church interiors. Used in church services, sacred music must in la Cour's

view "serve, inspire and enrich the worship of the congregation", and for him the sacred music tradition is the natural starting point. But the tradition is not a limitation for la Cour, who on the contrary sees awareness of the tradition as the path towards the creation of a personal artistic idiom; an idiom which for him ideally seeks beauty and a suprapersonal sublimity.

Niels la Cour also seeks the suprapersonal and timeless in the texts on which he bases his choral music. Music and text must fit together, and la Cour's attitude to sacred choral music is clear: it must be "the handmaid of the word". "Good choral music is characterized by the fact that it sounds as though it has been written for the sake of the text," he says, and continues: "By setting the text up on paper one almost already has the recipe for the musical progression". As with his attitude to the musical tradition, though, this does not have a limiting effect, for in this case too the composer seeks to penetrate to the essence of the text and combine it with his own artistic idiom.

ABOUT THE WORKS

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house

In the motet *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house* (1985/86) la Cour has taken his point of departure in three different Psalms which he weaves together into a poetic totality, as in the theological practice where one combines scriptural texts so they fit with an overall theme. The text unfolds in a rondo-like, generally duple musical form which presents three main ideas: blessed praise, jubilant thanksgiving and fervent love. The first is the consistent main motif of the piece, from which the other motifs develop organically through subtle changes of shading. The piece begins with an underlying organ note over which the women's voices enter in unison with a long-lasting arc ascending through a pentatonic scale, finally dividing into a simple two-part texture and forming a rudimentary half-cadence. Text and musical structure both have a gently wavering character that expresses mankind's humility towards God. After this la Cour sets a more extroverted verse that turns the thoughts to the Gospel message of joy in Jesus. Musically the jubilation is expressed by the way the choir engages in a powerful four-part texture with rhythmically telling stresses, syncopes and triplets. Then the initial beatitude returns, with a denser but expanded sonority, until the third motif of the piece enters with a profession of faith and love of God, musically personified by the tenor voice bearing the text beneath a

chromatically rich accompaniment of women's voices and organ. Again the full four-part choir sets in, interpolating a kind of nature lyricism before the passage gradually thins out and finds its way back to the single organ note of the introduction.

The second main section unfolds in its basic features as a varied, intensified repetition of the first. The most striking variation comes with the jubilant thanksgiving which now lies like a long recitation in the soprano part with sporadic echoes in the lower parts. The organ part too has its expressive peak here, dominated by a low-lying ostinato which along with the top note of the soprano forms a major-second interval – structurally corresponding to the very first melodic step of the main motif. The piece ends with a fragment of the main motif, succeeded by a long-drawn-out 'Amen', which just before the final notes sees an almost medieval double leading-note cadence in the female voices.

3 Intermezzi

With its 20 minutes of playing time, *3 Intermezzi* (1973/74) is despite its humble title an important contribution to the Danish organ literature. This is not simply a matter of three separate character pieces; it is a unified three-movement work with recurrent motivic material. The work is dedicated to and was given its first whole performance by the organist Elisabeth Westenholz at a concert in the church Holmens Kirke on 21 January 1974, which also strengthens its identity as a unified composition. Nevertheless the designation *intermezzi* has a special significance, since the movements are thus, as 'interludes', in accordance with Niels la Cour's attitude to sacred music, something that can be experienced in a larger conceivable liturgical framework. With customary modesty the composer also remarks that his detailed stopping instructions "are only meant as hints which the performer can freely develop and vary at his or her discretion".

The first movement, *Introuit*, begins with a grave chorale-like monologue in a free-tonality neoclassical style. One senses a polyphonic construction principle, but also an organically fantasizing encirclement of something as simple as a C major triad. After four phrases a second part enters as a free fugato, and gradually the space of the sonority expands until a bass part halts the polyphonic flight with a repeated accompaniment figure as underlay for a melodic-symmetric theme that will turn out to run through the whole movement. The subsequent sections offer a number of varying tableaux marked by shifts in the registration, new ostinato

structural patterns and a regular return to the symmetrical theme established in the first section, with which the movement also falls calm in the end.

The second movement, *Hymn of Praise*, opens with a whirling, virtuoso, stepwise tremolo figure over four notes as the background for a calmly wandering melody with reminiscences of the chorale introduction in the first movement. This two-part texture results temporarily in an abrupt staccato motif of repeated dissonant chords, after which the whirling movement is resumed. The two textural types continue to interrupt each other throughout the movement, but with an expanded middle section where the abrupt chords are developed through a series of variations that lead to the reappearance of the main theme from the first movement.

The third movement, *Holy Communion*, is a calm, sonorous pastorale in classic AABA form. The A section is consistently laid out with a figured solo melody spun out across an almost jazzy tetrad-based chord progression. The jazziness is also helped by the soft offbeat and characteristic blue note of the solo melody about midway through the movement section. The B section changes temperament to a medieval parallel texture which discreetly takes its point of departure from the first movement. This leads into an extended, melodically figured but harmonically static segment which once more ends in the cyclic main motif of the work, before the recapitulation sets in.

Cantio Mariae

With the three Marian songs written in 2005 we leap forward 20-30 years in time to a present-day Niels la Cour. Here, compared with the introductory motet, we hear a more directly communicative, almost madrigal-like choral style. The tonality is clearly coloured by major and minor sounds in what one could call a neo-Romantic tonal language. The melodic lines are more concentrated and emphasize the text in a simple, emotionally rich syllabic execution. However, the change in style could also be explained by the text, which is not Biblical, but consists of hymns with no direct liturgical function.

The threefold *Tota pulchra es*, however, holds a little secret, since the middle section takes its text from the Magnificat in the Gospel of Luke, also known as the Cantic of Mary. Compared with the sonorous setting of the hymn text, the interpolated cantic section is also much more ascetically set in a chanting *recitando*.

Niels la Cour has reworked the famous *Stabat Mater* hymn *en miniature* and picked out a few individual verses which he juxtaposes in two very different textural types. He stages the emblematic introductory words of the piece, "Stabat Mater dolorosa", in a decidedly dolorous madrigalistic harmony. Then Mary's sorrowful vision of her son on the cross is conjured up in a ghost-like, quickly fading fugato. From there the movement leaps to the beginning of the second half of the hymn, which praises the motherly love of Mary. Here la Cour unfolds a grand, optimistic-sounding fugato followed by stepwise-descending melismata towards an open cadence that leads back to the torment of the "Stabat Mater".

The *Regina caeli* is based on the Gregorian melody of the Marian antiphon of the same name. After a singing-through of the melody in unison, la Cour sets it in a quite simple, four-part choral style but then takes his motivic material out on a long contrapuntal journey, first through a regular triple fugue with successive developments and then a cantus firmus texture in which an augmentation of the main theme is one of the three contrapuntal parts. The movement ends in a jubilant homophonic "Alleluia".

Vesper Organi

In connection with the publication in 2013, Niels la Cour furnished this work with a programme note: "The word *vesper* (Latin "evening") is used on the one hand as the name of a liturgical "evensong" (mainly Protestant) and on the other of "the prayer for the canonical hour at the onset of darkness" (mainly Catholic).

If one imagines that a church or monastery one day exceptionally decides to substitute a half-hour organ concert for the Vespers, giving the organist a free hand to put together an "organ Vespers" that need not follow the course of the liturgical Vespers, but may simply be generally inspired by it, then one has the idea that formed the starting point for this composition.

For some of the movements – such as Prayer, Silence and Hymn – the main inspiration has been the world of the canonical hours; for others – such as the Prelude and Fugue – it has been the world of organ music. Here and there, too, motifs have been used that are meant to refer to the kind of plainsong or recitation that one might for example hear in the context of a Gregorian Vespers.

In *Vesper Organi* (2003) one notes the same stylistic development as described above in the *Cantio Mariae*. The style is more direct, the melodies more motivically telling and the harmonies more classically tonal. However, this does not mean that the music sounds more old-fashioned. On the contrary the nine movements exhibit a marked contemporaneity in the undogmatic and boldly precise use of often-striking devices such as the cascades of tumbling broken triads in the first movement, *Preludio*, the seventh movement, *Inno* (Hymn), and the concluding *Postludio*; or the percussive chordal motif in *Lauda* and the persistent Dies Irae motif in the same movement. The work also offers sporadic near-gaps as in the transition to the recapitulation in the third movement, *Preghiera* (Prayer), or the whole sixth movement, *Quiète* (Silence), which with its succession of mysterious chords appears almost purged of melodic form. A stark contrast to this is the monumental middle movement, *Fuga*, which quite simply is a grand fugue with all the required thematic developments, counterpoint and sequences. After the neoclassical sublimity of the earlier organ works, la Cour presents a four-part fugue based on three subjects which so to speak get directly to grips with the listener with their contrapuntal constitution. The original high point of the work is however the seventh movement, *Inno*, with its impactful mixture of wildly virtuosic figurings and scale runs with almost impudent fanfare-like eruptions which seem to "slide" up and down the keys.

Den store mester kommer & Frelseren er mig en hyrde god

With the two chorales to B.S. Ingemann's well known hymn texts *Den store mester kommer* (The great master is coming) and *Frelseren er mig en hyrde god* (A good shepherd is my Saviour) we get a couple of glimpses of Niels la Cour's formidable talent for the simple strophic song. All Danish choirs presumably know his setting for *Fred hviler over land og by* (Peace lies over town and country) from 1987, which in the choir context has long outstripped Rudolph Bay's catchy old Romantic hymn tune to the same text. But in the case of the chorales too these two represent la Cour from a more melodically narrative side. Both chorales are in C and swing their way up to a characteristic Mixolydian minor seventh where we hear the sacred music legacy of Carl Nielsen and Peter Møller shining through. The form is balanced, melody and harmony are appealing without being insistent. Both pieces are obvious candidates for the choir repertoire as well as congregational singing.

Wings

Between the two chorales stands Niels la Cour's very first choral composition, which is at the same time his only non-sacred choral work, the piece for women's choir, *Wings*, to a text by Karen Blixen. The work is from 1973, composed four years earlier than the series of sacred choral pieces that began with *5 Motets* (1977). *Wings* is stylistically clearly influenced by Vagn Holmboe, whose huge contribution to the choral literature reached a peak in the 1970s. Nevertheless already here we encounter something gentler and closer to the text in Niels la Cour's work, especially evident in the treatment of the Blixen poem's textual leitmotif "only of wings", which la Cour causes to emerge from the gently rocking textural flow as sensitive peaks with a recurrent, clearly recognizable sequenced motif.

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THE PERFORMERS

Bine Bryndorf (organ) is a professor of organ and sacred music at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen. She is also employed part-time as an organist at the Trinitatis Church in Copenhagen. She was born and grew up in Helsingør, and at the age of 18 she went to Vienna and took her whole basic training course there. Later came the soloist class and further studies in Saarbrücken and Boston. Her most important teachers were Kristian Olesen (organ), Børn Hjelmborg (theory), Michael Radulescu and Daniel Roth (organ), William Porter (improvisation) as well as Gordon Murray (harpsichord). She has played concerts in most European countries, in Japan and the USA and is in great demand as a jury member in international organ competitions. Chamber music has always been an important element in her activities. With the Baroque repertoire as stepping stone, she works with the whole wide spectrum of the organ repertoire. After this 2014 release of works by Niels la Cour, 2015 will see two CDs with works by Carl Nielsen, and by Scheidemann and Bruhns, respectively. In addition she has recorded works by J.S. Bach and Buxtehude. Bine Bryndorf has been a teacher at the Musikhochschule in Vienna and since 1994 teaches at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen.

Trinitatis Kantori Chamber Choir is an independent concert choir regularly associated with Christian IV's old Baroque church Trinitatis Kirke with its astronomical Round Tower. The choir was founded in 1993 by the conductor Per Enevold and the organist Inge Bønnerup, and consists today of about 35 singers. The organist and precentor at Trinitatis, Søren Christian Vestergaard, has conducted the choir since 2013. Over the years Trinitatis Kantori has given a long succession of concerts, several of which have been broadcast by the Danish broadcasting corporation DR. Many of the concerts have been held in the Trinitatis Church and in the beautiful library of the Round Tower, but the Kantori also gives concerts in other places both in Denmark and abroad. In 1999 the choir won First Prize in the category "chamber choir" in the European radio choir competition "Let the Peoples Sing". The concert tours of the Kantori have often gone to music festivals all over Europe, and in 1999 the choir was on tour in Japan. Besides a rich a cappella repertoire they often perform major works together with an orchestra, and the programme often includes masterworks such as Bach's *Magnificat*, *St. John Passion*, *St. Matthew Passion*, *Mass in B minor* and the *Christmas Oratorio*, as well as Mozart's *Requiem*. Monteverdi's *Vesperae beatae Mariae Virginis* has also been performed several times in collaboration with specialists on original instruments, besides the requiems of Brahms and Verdi. The CD of Niels la Cour's music is the twelfth CD released by Trinitatis Kantori.

Søren Christian Vestergaard has been the organist and precentor in Trinitatis Church since 2007. He graduated in 1993 with a diploma in sacred music Diploma from the West Jutland Academy of Music in Esbjerg. Later he studied in Vienna, Hamburg and Paris. Søren Christian Vestergaard gave his debut concert after studies with Professor Hans Fagius at the Royal Danish Academy of Music. In 1993-2006 he was the organist at Jægersborg Church and in 2006-2007 assistant organist in Copenhagen Cathedral. Since 1999 he has also taught the organ at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen. For several years before his engagement in Trinitatis Church he had a musical collaboration with Trinitatis Kantori and he has accompanied the choir in many concerts and CD recordings and has participated in the choir's tours. In April 2013 Søren Christian Vestergaard took over as artistic director of Trinitatis Kantori after Per Enevold and he is now the regular conductor of the choir.



TRINITATIS KANTORI



BINÉ BRYNDORF



SØREN CHRISTIAN VESTERGAARD

ARVEN FRA ROMS KATEDRALER af Christian Hildebrandt

Da den 30-årige **Niels la Cour** i 1975 rejste til Rom med kunstfondens store legat, må hans fintmærkende ører have opfanget århundredernes efterklange af musikken i byens katedraler.

Med sig i bagagen havde la Cour foruden uddannelsen i musikteori og musikhistorie fra Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium også en komponistkarriere på spring med en voksende værklister af klaver-, kammer- og orkestremusik. Allerede i gymnasietiden i begyndelsen af 1960'erne spillede han orgel og fik undervisning af orgelikonet Finn Viderø. Herefter gik la Cour den akademiske vej, først med musikstudier og filosofikum fra Københavns Universitet, siden den klassiske konservatorievej som elev af koryfæerne Finn Høffding, Bjørn Hjelmberg og Svend Westergaard. Han fulgte senere selv i deres spor som mangeårig lærer i musikteori på Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium. Som komponist var la Cours største inspirationskilde studierne først hos 'den danske Messiaen' Leif Kayser og siden hos komponisterne Vieri Tosatti og Armando Renzi i Rom. Efter studierne i Rom begyndte kirkemusikken efterhånden at få en central placering i la Cours værklister, hvilket de følgende årtier bl.a. førte til hovedværkerne *Missa brevis* (1989), komponeret på bestilling til Radiokammerkoret, og *Fantasia per organo* (1993-94) samt de store værker på nærværende udgivelse. Mange tusind danske korsangere kender og elsker Niels la Cours motetter og salmer, og han blev i 1988 hædret med titlen 'Årets korkomponist'.

Man siger, at alle veje fører til Rom, men hvad angår den kirkemusikalske tradition, kan man tilføje, at alle kilder udspringer fra Rom. Her voksede den gregorianske sang frem, og her skabte Palestrina på renæssancens højdepunkt en musikalsk kunstsat, som både samlede trådene fra de foregående generationer og lagde grunden til de efterfølgendes klassiske flerstemmighed. Kongstanken i palestrinastilen er balance, indre sammenhæng og en rolig, organisk åndende melodik og harmonik. Som en musikalsk besjæling af principperne for katedralernes store arkitektur.

Niels la Cours kor- og orgelmusik er rundet af denne tradition, og den er som skabt til at udsmykke store kirkerum. Benyttet som gudstjenestemusik skal kirkemusik efter la Cours opfattelse "tjene, inspirere og berige menighedens gudsdyrkelse", og for ham er den kirkemusikalske tradition det naturlige udgangspunkt. Men traditionen er ikke en begrænsning for la Cour, som

tværtimod ser bevidsthed om traditionen som vejen til at skabe et personligt kunstnerisk udtryk. Et udtryk, som for ham ideelt set søger skønhed og en overpersonlig ophøjethed.

Det overpersonlige og tidløse søger Niels la Cour også i de tekster, han lægger til grund for sin kormusik. Musik og tekst skal passe sammen, og hvad angår den kirkelige kormusik er la Cours holdning klar: Den skal være "ordets tjener". "God kormusik er kendetegnet ved, at den lyder som, man har skrevet den for tekstens skyld", siger han og fortsætter: "Ved at stille teksten op på papiret har man næsten allerede opskriften for det musikalske forløb". Ligesom i forholdet til den musikalske tradition virker det dog ikke som en begrænsning, for også her gælder det for komponisten om at trænge ind i teksten og forene den med sit eget kunstneriske udtryk.

OM VÆRKERNE

Salige de, der bor i dit hus

I motetten *Salige de, der bor i dit hus* (1985/86) har la Cour taget udgangspunkt i tre forskellige kapitler fra Salmernes Bog, som han fletter sammen til en sproglig helhed, ligesom det er teologisk praksis at sammenstille tekststeder, så de passer til et overordnet tema. Teksten udfoldes i en rondo-agtig overordnet todelt musikalsk form, som præsenterer tre hovedtanker: Salig lovprisning, jublende takkesang og inderlig kærlighed. Førstnævnte er satsens gennemgående hovedmotiv, hvorfra de andre motiver udvikler sig organisk gennem subtile nuanceskift. Satsen begynder med en liggende orgeltone, hvorpå damestemmerne unisont sætter ind med en langstrakt, opstigende bue gennem en pentaton skala for til sidst at dele sig i en enkel tostemmighed og forme en rudimentær halvslutning. Både tekst og satsanlæg har en blidt svævende karakter, som udtrykker menneskets ydmyghed over for Gud. Herefter sætter la Cour et mere udadvendt tekstvers, som leder tankerne til det evangeliske glædesbudskab om Jesus. Musikalsk ytrer jubelen sig ved, at koret sætter i med kraftfuld firstemmighed med rytmisk prægnant betoning, synkoper og trioler. Derpå kommer den indledende saligprisning igen, dog i fortættet og klangligt udvidet form, inden satsens tredje motiv sætter ind med bekendelse og kærlighed til Gud, musikalsk personificeret af tenorstemmen som tekstbærer under et kromatisk klangmættet akkompagnement af damestemmer og orgel. Igen sætter det fuldt firstemmige kor nu ind med et nærmest naturlyrisk indskud, inden afsnittet gradvis udtynedes og finder tilbage til indledningens ene orgeltone.

Andet hovedafsnit udfolder sig i grundtræk som en varieret og intensiveret gentagelse af det første. Den mest markante variation finder sted ved den jublende takkesang, som nu ligger som en lang recitation i sopranstemmen med pletvist ekko i understemmerne. Også orgelstemmen når her sit udtryksmæssige maksimum præget af et dybtliggende ostinato, der sammen med sopranens toptone danner et stort sekundinterval – i strukturel korrespondance med hovedmotivets allerførste melodiske skridt. Satsen munder ud i et fragment af hovedmotivet, afløst af et langstrakt "Amen", der lige før den endelige kadence får en nærmest middelalderlig dobbelt ledetone-kadence i damestemmerne.

3 Intermezzi

Med 20 minutters spilletid er *3 Intermezzi* (1973/74) trods sin ydmyge titel et vægtigt bidrag i dansk orgellitteratur. Der er nemlig ikke blot tale om tre adskilte karakterstykker, men derimod om et sammenhængende tresatset værk med gennemgående motivstof. Værket er tilegnet og uropført i sin helhed af organisten Elisabeth Westenholz ved en koncert i Holmens Kirke 21. januar 1974, hvilket også styrker dets identitet som sammenhængende komposition. Alligevel giver betegnelsen intermezzi en særlig betydning, idet satserne hermed som "mellemspil" i overensstemmelse med Niels la Cours holdning til kirkemusik kan opleves i en større – tænkt – liturgisk sammenhæng. Med vanlig beskedenhed bemærker komponisten også, at de grundige registreringsanvisninger "kun er ment som fingerpeg, som den udøvende frit kan udbygge og variere efter eget skøn".

Første sats *Intritus* begynder med en alvorlig koralagtig monolog i fritonal neoklassisk stil. Man fornemmer et polyfont konstruktionsprincip, men også en organisk fabulerende indkredsning af noget så enkelt som en C-dur-treklang. Efter fire fraser sætter en andenstemme ind som i et frit fugato, og gradvis udvides klangrummet, indtil en basstemme standser den polyfone flugt med en gentagen akkompagnementsfigur som underlægning til et melodisk-symmetrisk tema, som skal vise sig at være gennemgående i hele satsen. De følgende afsnit byder på en række afvekslende tableauer, markeret af skift i registrering, nye ostinate satsmønstre og jævnlig tilbagevenden til det i første afsnit etablerede symmetriske tema, som satsen også ender med at falde til ro i.

Anden sats *Lovsang* åbner med en hvirvlende virtuos trinvis tremolofigur over fire toner som baggrund for en roligt vandrende melodi med mindelser om den korale indledning i første sats. Denne tostemmighed munder kortvarigt ud i et abrupt staccatomotiv af gentagne dissonante

akkorder, hvorefter hvirvelsatsen genoptages. De to satstyper fortsætter med at afbryde hinanden satsen igennem, dog med et udbygget midterparti hvor de abrupte akkorder udvikles gennem en serie variationer, som fører frem til genkomsten af hovedtemaet fra første sats.

Tredje sats *Nadver* er en rolig, klangfuld pastorale i klassisk AABA-form. A-stykket er konsekvent disponeret med en figureret solomelodi, spundet hen over en næsten jazzet firklangs-baseret akkordprogression. Det jazzede præg får også hjælp af solomelodiens bløde offbeat og karakteriske blå tone som højdepunkt omtrent midtvejs i satsdelen. B-stykket skifter stemning til en middelalderagtig parallelsats, som diskret tager udgangspunkt i hovedtemaet fra første sats. Det fører over i et langstrakt, melodisk figureret, men harmonisk stillestående forløb, som igen ender i værkets cykliske hovedmotiv, før reprisen sætter ind.

Cantio Mariæ

Med de tre Maria-sange skrevet i 2005 springer vi 20-30 år frem i tiden til en nutidig Niels la Cour. I forhold til den indledende motet hører vi her en mere direkte kommunikerende, nærmest madrigalistisk korstil. Tonaliteten er tydeligt farvet af dur- og molklange, i hvad man kunne kalde et neoromantisk tonesprog. De melodiske linjer er mere koncentrerede og fremhæver teksten i et enkelt og følelsesmættet, syllabisk foredrag. Stilændringen kunne dog også begrundes med tekstforlægget, som ikke er bibelsk, men religiøse hymner uden direkte liturgisk funktion.

Den tredelte *Tota pulchra es* bærer imidlertid på en lille hemmelighed, idet midterdelen henter sin tekst fra Lukasevangeliets magnificat, også kendt som Mariæ Lovsang. I forhold til den klangmættede sats til hymneteksten er det indskudte lovsangsafsnit også anderledes asketisk udsat i et messende recitando.

Den berømte *Stabat Mater*-hymne har Niels la Cour bearbejdet en *miniature* og plukket nogle enkelte vers ud, som han modstiller i to meget forskellige satstyper. Satsens emblematiske indledningsord "Stabat Mater dolorosa" iscenesætter han i en udpræget madrigalistisk smertelig harmonik. Herefter manes Marias tunge syn af sin søn på korset frem i et spøgelsesagtigt og hurtigt hendøende fugato. Derfra springer satsen til begyndelsen af hymnens anden halvdel, som lovpriser Marias moderkærlighed. Her udfolder la Cour et storladent, optimistisk klingende fugato, efterfulgt af trinvis faldende melismer mod en åben slutning, som leder tilbage til det smertende "Stabat Mater".

Til grund for *Regina caeli* ligger den gregorianske melodi fra Mariaantifonen af samme navn. Efter en unison gennemsyngning af melodien udsætter la Cour den i helt enkel, firstemmig koralstil, men herefter tager han motivstoffet ud på en lang kontrapunktisk rejse igennem først en regulær tripelfuga med successive gennemføringer og derpå en cantus firmus-sats, hvori en augmentation af hovedtemaet er blandt de tre kontrapunkterende stemmer. Satsen munder ud i et jublende homofont "alleluia".

Vesper Organi

Dette værk har Niels la Cour i forbindelse med udgivelsen i 2013 forsynet med en programnote:

"Ordet vesper (latin: aften) bruges som betegnelse dels på en liturgisk "aftensang" (hovedsagelig protestantisk) dels på "tidebønnen ved mørkets frembrud" (hovedsagelig katolsk).

Hvis man tænker sig, at man i en kirke eller et kloster beslutter undtagelsesvist en dag at lade vesperen erstatte af en halv times orgelkoncert, idet organisten gives frie hænder til at sammensætte en "orglets vesper", der ikke behøver at følge gangen i den liturgiske vesper, men blot kan være alment inspireret deraf, så har man idéen, der dannede udgangspunkt for denne komposition.

For nogle af satserne, såsom *Bøn*, *Stilhed* og *Hymne*, har især tidebønnens verden været inspirationen, for andre, såsom *Preludio* og *Fuga*, især orgelmusikkens. Hist og her er desuden brugt motiver, der skulle hentyde til den form for gregoriansk sang eller recitation, som man eksempelvis kunne møde inden for en gregoriansk vesper."

I *Vesper Organi* (2003) sporer man samme stilfæssige udvikling, som før beskrevet hos *Cantio Mariæ*. Stilen er mere direkte, melodierne mere motivisk prægnante og harmonierne mere klassisk tonale. Det betyder dog ikke, at musikken klinger mere gammeldags. Tværtimod udstråler de ni satser en slående nutidighed i den udogmatiske og modigt præcise anvendelse af ofte frapperende virkemidler som kaskaderne af væltende treklangsbrydninger i førstesatsen *Preludio*, syvende sats *Inno* (Hymne) og det afsluttende *Postludio*. Eller som det perkussive akkordmotiv i *Lauda* (Lovsang) og det vedholdende dies-irae-motiv senere i samme sats. Værket byder også på stedvis næsten tomrum som i overgangen til reprisen i tredje sats *Preghiera* (Bøn) eller hele sjette sats *Quiète* (Stilhed), som med sin række af mystiske akkorder fremtræder næsten renset for melodisk form. I stærk kontrast hertil står den monumentale midtersats *Fuga*, som slet og ret er en stort anlagt fuga med alt, hvad dertil hører af tema-

gennemføringer, kontrapunkter og sekvenser. I modsætning til det tidligere orgelværks neoklassiske ophøjethed præsenterer la Cour her en firdelt fuga bygget over tre regulære fugatemaer, som så at sige går direkte i kødet på lytteren med deres kontrapunktiske habitus. Værkets originale højdepunkt er dog syvendesatsen *Inno* med dens virkningsfulde blanding af vildt virtuose figureringer og skalaløb med nærmest frække fanfareagtige udbrud, som synes at "glide" op og ned på tangenterne.

Den store mester kommer & Frelseren er mig en hyrde god

Med de to koraler til B.S. Ingemanns kendte salmer *Den store mester kommer* og *Frelseren er mig en hyrde god* får vi et par glimt af Niels la Cours formidable talent for den enkle, strofiske sang. Alle danske kor kender vel hans udsættelse af *Fred hviler over land og by* fra 1987, som i korsammenhæng for længst har udkonkurreret Rudolph Bays romantiske ørehænger af en salmemelodi til samme tekst. Men også for koralernes vedkommende viser de to her repræsenterede la Cour fra en mere melodisk fortællende side. Begge koraler er C-tonale og svinger sig op omkring en karakteristisk mixolydisk lille septim, hvor vi hører den kirkemusikalske arv fra Carl Nielsen og Peter Møller skinne igennem. Formen er afbalanceret, melodisk og harmonisk er fængende uden at være påtrængende. Begge satser er selvskevne til såvel korrepertoiret som menighedssang.

Vinger

Mellem de to koraler står Niels la Cours allerførste korkomposition, som samtidig også er hans eneste ikke-kirkelige korværk, nemlig damekorsatsen *Vinger* til tekst af Karen Blixen. Værket er fra 1973, komponeret 4 år forud for rækken af kirkelige korsatser, som begyndte med *5 Motetter* (1977). Vinger er stilistisk tydeligt under indflydelse af Vagn Holmboe, hvis enorme bidrag til korlitteraturen nåede et højdepunkt i 1970'erne. Alligevel møder vi allerede her noget mere mildt og umiddelbart tekstnært hos Niels la Cour, som især sætter sig igennem i Blixens digts tekstmæssige ledemotiv "kun om vinger", som hos la Cour dukker frem af den blidt vuggende satsstrøm som følsomme højdepunkter med et tilbagevendende, tydeligt genkendeligt sekvenseret motiv.

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DE UDØVENDE

Bine Bryndorf (orgel) er professor i orgel og kirkemusik ved Det Kgl. Danske Musikkonservatorium. Hun er desuden deltidsansat som organist ved Trinitatis Kirke i København. Hun er født og opvokset i Helsingør, og som 18-årig tog hun til Wien og fik hele sin grunduddannelse dér. Siden fulgte solistklasse og videregående studier i Saarbrücken og Boston. Hendes væsentligste lærere var Kristian Olesen (orgel), Bjørn Hjelmborg (teori), Michael Radulescu og Daniel Roth (orgel), William Porter (improvisation) samt Gordon Murray (cembalo). Hun har spillet koncerter i de fleste europæiske lande, i Japan og USA og er meget efterspurgt som jurymedlem ved internationale orgelkonkurrencer. Kammermusik er og har altid været en væsentlig del af hendes virke. Med udgangspunkt i barokmusikken beskæftiger hun sig med hele orgelrepertoirets store bredde. Efter denne 2014 cd med værker af Niels la Cour udkommer i 2015 to cd'er med værker af dels Carl Nielsen, dels Scheidemann og Bruhns. Desuden har hun indspillet værker af J.S. Bach og Buxtehude. Bine Bryndorf har været lærer ved Musikhochschule i Wien og underviser siden 1994 ved Det Kgl. Danske Musikkonservatorium.

Kammerkoret Trinitatis Kantori er et selvstændigt koncertkor med fast tilknytning til Christian IV's gamle barokkirke, Trinitatis Kirke med det astronomiske tårn, Rundetårn. Kantoret blev stiftet i 1993 af dirigenten Per Enevold og organist Inge Bønnerup, og koret består af ca. 35 sangere. Organist og kantor ved Trinitatis Kirke, Søren Christian Vestergaard, har dirigeret koret siden 2013. Trinitatis Kantori har gennem årene givet en lang række koncerter, hvoraf adskillige har været transmitteret af Danmarks Radio. Mange af koncerterne har været afholdt i Trinitatis Kirke og i Rundetårns smukke bibliotekssal, men Kantoret afholder også koncerter andre steder i både ind- og udland. I 1999 vandt koret 1. prisen i kategorien "kammerkor" ved den europæiske radio-korkonkurrence "Let the Peoples Sing". Kantoriets koncertrejser er ofte gået til musikfestivaler rundt om i Europa, og i 1999 var koret på turné i Japan. Udover et righoldigt a cappella-repertoire opføres ofte større værker sammen med orkester; på programmet er ofte Bachs mesterværker så som *Magnificat*, *Johannespassionen*, *Matthæuspassionen*, *Messe i h-mol* og *Juleoratoriet*, foruden Mozarts *Requiem*. Monteverdis *Vesperae beatae Mariae Virginis* har også flere gange været opført i samarbejde med specialister på originalinstrumenter, foruden Brahms' og Verdis requier. CD'en med Niels la Cours musik er Trinitatis Kantoris 12. cd-udgivelse.

Søren Christian Vestergaard har været organist og kantor i Trinitatis Kirke siden 2007. Han er uddannet i 1993 med Kirkemusikalsk Diplomeksamen fra Vestjysk Musikkonservatorium i Esbjerg. Sidenhen studier i Wien, Hamborg og Paris. Søren Christian Vestergaard havde sin debutkoncert efter studier hos prof. Hans Fagius ved Det Kgl. Danske Musikkonservatorium. Fra 1993-2006 var han organist ved Jægersborg kirke og fra 2006-2007 assisterende organist i Københavns Domkirke. Siden 1999 har han desuden været orgellærer ved Det Kgl. Danske Musikkonservatorium i København. Han har flere år før sin ansættelse i Trinitatis Kirke haft et musikalsk samarbejde med Trinitatis Kantori og har akkompagneret koret under adskillige koncerter, cd-optagelser, og deltaget i korets turneer. I april 2013 overtog Søren Christian Vestergaard den kunstneriske ledelse af Trinitatis Kantori efter Per Enevold og er nu fast dirigent for koret.

Salige de, der bor i dit hus

(fra Salme 26, 84 og 95)

- [1] Salige de, der bor i dit hus, end skal de love dig.
Kom, lad os juble for Herren, juble i sang til
hans pris.
Kom, lad os knæle for Herren, møde med
tak for hans åsyn.
Salige de, der bor i dit hus, end skal de love dig.
Herre, jeg elsker dit hus, det sted, hvor
din herlighed bor.
Ja, spurven finder sig et hjem og svalen en rede.
Dine alre, Herre, min Gud.
Salige de, der bor i dit hus, end skal de love dig.

CANTIO MARIÆ

Tota pulchra es

(fra Maria-antifoner og Lukas 1)

- [5] Tota pulchra es, Maria!
Virgo prudentissima.
Mater clementissima.
O pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria.
Et ait Maria:
Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me
dicent omnes generationes.
Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est:
Et sanctum nomen ejus.

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house

(from Psalms 26, 84 and 95)

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house:
they will be still praising thee.
O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make
a joyful noise in his praise.
O come, let us kneel before our Lord, let us
come before his presence with thanksgiving.
Blessed are they that dwell in thy house:
they will be still praising thee.
O Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house,
and the place where thine honour dwelleth.
Yea, the sparrow hath found a house, and
the swallow a nest for herself,
even thine altars, O Lord of hosts.
Blessed are they that dwell in thy house:
they will be still praising thee.

CANTIO MARIÆ

Tota pulchra es

(From Marian Antiphons and Luke 1)

Thou art all beautiful, Mary!
Most wise of virgins,
Most merciful of mothers,
O pious, o sweet Virgin Mary.
And Mary said:
Behold henceforth all generations
Shall call me blessed.
For He that is mighty hath magnified me
And holy is His name.

Stabat Mater dolorosa

(Fra det franciskanske digt Stabat Mater, 1200-tallet)

- 6 Stabat Mater dolorosa
juxta crucem lacrimosa,
dum pendebat Filius.

Eja Mater, fons amoris,
me sentire vim doloris
fac, ut tecum lugeam.

Regina caeli

(Maria-antifon)

- 7 Regina caeli laetare, alleluia:
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia:
Resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia:
Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia.

Den store mester kommer

(B.S. Ingemann)

- 17 Den store mester kommer,
fuldkærlig er hans id,
han sidder ved smeltediglen
og lutrer sølvet med flid.

Det øjeblik han venter
og agter kærlig på,
når klarlig hans eget billed
vil dybt i sølvspejlet stå.

Stabat Mater

(From the 13th-century Franciscan poem Stabat Mater)

Tearfully the mourning mother
by the Cross stood weeping
where her son was hanging.

Oh, thou Mother, fount of love,
Make me feel the power of sorrow
that in mourning I may join thee.

Regina caeli

(Marian Antiphon)

Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.
The Son whom you deserved to bear, alleluia,
Has risen as He said, alleluia.
Pray for us to God, alleluia.

The great master is coming

B.S. Ingemann (1789-1862)

The great master is coming,
wholly loving are his deeds,
he sits at his melting pot
diligently purifying silver.

The moment he is waiting for
and lovingly heeds
is when his own image will stand there
clearly, deep in the silver mirror.

Den store mester kommer,
som smelter sjæl og sind,
han sidder ved hjertegruben,
han ser i sjælene ind.

Og har i hjertedybet
sit billed klart han set,
så glædes den høje mester,
så er hans gerning alt sket.

Vinger

(Karen Blixen)

- 18 I mit fængsel synger mit hjerte
kun om vinger, kun om vinger,
ingen andre af verdens skønne
sange skønt for dets øre klinger.
Selv fugle født i bur har vist drømme,
hvor de frit sig mod himlen svinger,
og i sit fængsel synger mit hjerte
kun om vinger, kun om vinger.

Høj er himlen, et dyb af klarhed,
en brønd af blå, og af stråler skinnende,
højt vil jeg stige uden at svimle,
se jorden forsvinde, lege med vindene.
Skøn er jorden ved sommertide,
når alle roser af svøbet springer,
men i sit fængsel synger mit hjerte
kun om vinger, kun om vinger.

The great master is coming,
he who melts soul and mind,
he sits at the pit of the heart,
gazing into the souls.

And if in the depths of the heart
he should see his image clearly,
the great master is happy,
his deeds are all done.

English transl. by Paula Hostrup-Jessen

Wings

(Karen Blixen)

In its prison my heart sings
only of wings, only of wings.
No other of the world's sweet songs
sound sweetly in its ears.
Even birds born in a cage must have dreams
where they soar freely to the heavens,
and in its prison my heart sings
only of wings, only of wings.

High are the heavens, clear their depths;
a well of blue, shining with their beams.
High will I soar without growing faint,
see the earth vanish, play with the winds.
Fair is the earth in the summer time,
when all roses from their swaddling spring,
but in its prison my heart sings
only of wings, only of wings.

Frelseren er mig en hyrde god

(B.S. Ingemann)

19 Frelseren er mig en hyrde god,
hos ham skal jeg intet savne:
Lammet hviler ved hyrdens fod,
nævnes med kærlige navne.

Såret jeg flyed fra ulvens tand,
mit blod til hans fod er rundet.
Selv han bar mig til kildens rand,
dér har jeg lægedom fundet.

Hovedet hviler jeg i hans skød,
jeg læskes af livets vande.
Palmen køler mig dagens glød,
svaler min brændende pande.

Skal jeg end vandre til ormes land
og gå gennem dødens skygger,
hos mig vandrer i skyggen han,
lyser, hvor rædselen bygger.

Ud fra forrådnelsens hjem jeg går,
forbarmelsens hånd mig kvæger:
Hos mig kærligheds fyrste står,
rækker mig saligheds bæger.

A good shepherd is my Saviour

(B.S. Ingemann)

A good shepherd is my Saviour
with Him I shall not want.
The lamb rests at the foot of the shepherd,
called by loving names.

Wounded I fled the tooth of the wolf,
my blood has run down at His foot.
He bore me himself to the edge of the spring
and there did I healing find.

I rest my head in His bosom.
My thirst is quenched by the water of life.
The palm cools the heat of the day for me,
refreshing my burning brow.

Though I wend my way to the realm of worms,
and walk through the shadows of death,
He walks by me in the shade,
shining where horrors dwell.

Out of the halls of corruption I go,
restored by mercy's hand.
By me stands the Prince of Love,
and hands me the cup of bliss.



Great organ, specification

Marcussen & Son 1956, 53 stops. Rebuilt 1977 by P.G. Andersen.
Renovated by P.G. Andersen & Bruhn 2010

Hovedværk (Great)	Rygpositiv (Positiv)	Svelleværk (Swell)	Pedal (Pedal)
Principal 16	Principal 8	Gedakt 16	Principal 16
Principal 8	Gedakt 8	Principal 8	Subbas 16
Spidsfløjte 8	Quintaten 8	Rørfløjte 8	Quint 10 2/3
Oktav 4	Oktav 4	Viola di gamba 8	Oktav 8
Fløjte 4	Rørfløjte 4	Vox celeste 8	Gedakt 8
Nasard 2 2/3	Oktav 2	Oktav 4	Oktav 4
Doublette 2	Blokfløjte 2	Kobbelfløjte 4	Fløjte 4
Terts 1 3/5	Quint 1 1/3	Salicional 4	Nathorn 2
Mixtur V	Sesquialtera II	Fladfløjte 2	Mixtur IV
Scharf III	Scharf IV	Cornet II	Basun 16
Trompet 8	Dulcian 16	Mixtur IV	Fagot 16
Chromorne 8	Vox Humana 8	Trompet 16	Trompet 8
Tremulant	Skalmjeje 8	Trompette harmonique 8	Skalmjeje 4
	Tremulant	Obo 8	
	Clairon 4		

Compass manual C-g": *Compass pedal C-f*: *Couplers SV-HV, RP-HV, SV-RP, HV-P, SV-P, RP-P*.
Setzer. Mechanical action. Electrical stop action.



The Choir Organ, specification:

P.-G. Andersen 1987. Architects Inger & Johannes Exner

Manual I

Blokfløjte 8
Principal 4
Oktav 2

Manual II

Gedakt 8
Gedaktfløjt 4
Rørquint 2 2/3
Terts 1 3/5
Rørfløjte 4
Oktav 1

Pedal

Subbas 16

Compass manual C-g": *Compass pedal C-f*:
Couplers: II-I, I-P, II-P. Mechanical action.

DDD

Recorded in Trinitatis Church, Copenhagen, on 15-18 June and 20 August 2014
Recording producer and sound engineer: Preben Iwan

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Recorded in the DXD audio format (Digital eXtreme Definition), 352.8 kHz/32bit,
Microphone main array: 3x DPA 4006TL
DAD AX24 converters/preamps, Pyramix DAW system with Tango Controller.
Monitored on B&W 802 Diamond speakers.

Liner notes: Christian Hildebrandt

English translation: James Manley

Proofreader: Svend Ravnkilde

Photos p. 12: © Søren Svendsen (Trinitatis Kantori, Søren Christian Vestergaard)

Artwork: Denise Burt, www.elevator-design.dk

Publisher: Edition Egtved/Edition Wilhelm Hansen, www.ewh.dk (*Wings, Blessed are they, 3 Intermezzi*) and
Forlaget Mixtur, www.forlagetmixtur.dk (*Vesper Organi*)

Thanks to Niels la Cour for his vivid interest in this recording as well as the many good discussions on the music
and its interpretation. Also thanks to Malgorzata Skrzypek for assisting during the recording of the organ music.

Dacapo acknowledges, with gratitude, the financial support of Danish Composers' Society's Production
Pool/KODA's Cultural Funds, DOKS' Gramex midler and Trinitatis Kirkes Musikvenner and Trinitatis Kirkes
Menighedspleje

This CD has been recorded in cooperation with the Royal Danish Academy of Music.



8.224725

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MUSIKANTOLOGI

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