



EDVARD GRIEG
Complete Symphonic
Works • Vol. V

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EDVARD GRIEG

Complete Symphonic Works Vol. VI

Music to Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, Op. 23

At the Wedding (Act I, Prelude) 5:08

Dance of the Mountain King's Daughter (Act II, 6) 1:52

Six Orchestral Songs*

Solveig's Song, Op. 23 5:10

Solveig's Cradle Song, Op. 23 4:12

From Monte Pincio, Op. 39 No. 1 5:12

A Swan, Op. 25 No. 2 2:41

Last Spring, Op. 33 No. 2 5:41

Henrik Wergeland, Op. 58 No. 3 4:11

Two Lyric Pieces, Op. 68

No. 4: Evening in the Mountains 3:52

No. 5: At the Cradle 4:12

The Mountain Thrall, Op. 32** 6:04

Norwegian Dances, Op. 35

I. Allegro marcato 6:35

II. Allegretto tranquillo e grazioso 2:27

III. Allegro moderato alla Marcia 3:14

IV. Allegro molto 5:45



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Peer Gynt and his influence

Most plays in the nineteenth century had incidental music written for them: it is striking that, in our perception today, most of this music appears to stand in peculiar contrast to the corresponding plays. Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with its swift tempo, grotesque transformations and cynicism towards the lower classes is far more *outré* than Mendelssohn's music. And Edvard Grieg's music for Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, whose title character is misanthropic and egotistical, seems almost harmless – at least on first hearing, which has made numbers such as *Morning Mood* and *Solveig's Song* very popular. On closer inspection, however, the numbers with a more complex structure reveal a modern streak which Grieg avoids in his other orchestral music.

Let us examine the **Prelude to Act I** of Ibsen's verse drama, showing the peasant's son Peer as loser and perky winner at the same time. Thanks to his indifference, he has spoiled his chances to marry the rich Ingrid, which would have restored his family's finances. At the wedding celebrations, Solveig proves to be the only girl whom Peer really loves – nonetheless he abducts the bride, abandoning her after one night. In the Prelude ("At the Wedding"), Grieg presents us with festive wedding music which had become a fixture in Romantic operas. But after only half a minute, this music pauses and, with an abrupt change in mood, *Solveig's Song* is heard, which Grieg would arrange again and again for concert performances (including, the last time, for his *Six Orchestral Songs*). Another surprise follows: the space widens acoustically; behind the scenes a solo viola starts playing (replacing the Norwegian Hardanger fiddle), initially intoning a Halling and then a quick Springar, anticipating the dance scene. Only then does the wedding music return, this time in a broader version. This makes for a complex, intricately structured and musically highly attractive movement, already hinting at the main features of Peer's character – Norwegian rooting, blind recklessness and melancholy reflection.

The **Dance of the Mountain King's Daughter** from Act II, on the other hand, is one of the many erotic wooing dances performed by down-to-earth, magical or exotic women who seduce Peer. In this case it is the daughter of the demonic troll king, clad in green, who moves to a sturdy Norwegian dance, attractively orchestrated for piano, harp and xylophone. Grieg had planned this music as an "absolute parody" and wanted "the audience to perceive it as

such". Musically, he approached the rhythmically sharpened style of a Prokofiev or a Stravinsky.

In its audacity and spontaneous freshness, the music for Ibsen's drama was one of Grieg's happiest musical inspirations – perhaps exactly because he was pressed for time, writing for the performance at the Christiania Theatre in February 1876, not wishing to disappoint the world-famous poet. Grieg would draw on his *Peer Gynt* material for a long time, arranging two orchestral suites and recycling popular vocal numbers such as *Solveig's Song*. Two Solveig songs also open his cycle of **Six Orchestral Songs** which Grieg assembled from earlier songs during a stay in Copenhagen in 1894/95. The then 51-year-old composer was seriously indisposed due to illness at the time, forced, with a heavy heart, to cancel conducting engagements in Germany; he used his recovery period to write contributions to a popular genre of the day, the orchestral song.

Solveig's Song, with its wondrous shift from minor to major, essentially is a counterpart to Gretchen's spinning song, "Meine Ruh ist hin" [My peace is gone] from Part I of Goethe's *Faust*, even if in Grieg's case it is not the restless spinning wheel but Solveig's longing for the return of her unhappy love, Peer, which determines its character. Whilst Grieg kept the original instrumentation with four wind instruments, he drastically changed the sound of the last number of his incidental music when he incorporated it in the orchestral songs. Instead of a full orchestra plus choir it is now only harp and strings that accompany *Solveig's Lullaby* – a quiet, yet touching, triumph of constant love.

Most of the orchestral songs are dominated by an elegiac, autumnal atmosphere – including the Romantic evening song *From Monte Pincio*, setting a text by the Norwegian poet (who was later to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature) Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson. Not only did Grieg owe him several stage projects, but also his enthusiasm for the national cause. In his poetic view from the Pincian Hill, Bjørnson experiences the Roman goings-on as a contrast to Italy's erstwhile greatness which, at some point in the future, he believes will return. Accordingly, Grieg creates an attractive change of colour between the heroic tone of the evocation of antiquity and the bold dance music scurrying along in the manner of a waltz from a Delibes ballet at the end of the two verses.

As *From Monte Pincio*, the two following songs are also arrangements of earlier piano songs. *A Swan*, after a poem by Ibsen, appears like a heavy barcarolle depicting the silent swan that only begins singing at the point of death. Grieg had extracted the poem *Last Spring* from a collection by Aasmund Olavson Vinje. “Vinje was a peasant by birth”, Grieg later explained to his American biographer, Henry T Finck. “He attempted with his prose works to enlighten the Norwegian people: and these writings, together with his poems, gave him a great national importance.” In *Last Spring*, however, Vinje took up the ancient symbolism of blossoming nature and a retrospective view on a fulfilled life. Grieg set the slightly sentimental text with a rich string accompaniment, towards the end bordering on a Wagnerian soundscape.

Of a more recent date than the previous songs was the setting of John Paulsen’s poem *Henrik Wergeland*, evoking the deeds, death and significance of the Norwegian activist and poet Henrik Arnold Wergeland (1808-1845). Wergeland was a political polemicist and sympathiser of Norwegian language reform. He died of lung disease at the age of thirty-seven and has been celebrated by following generations as a guarantor of Norwegian independence, which had not yet been achieved during his lifetime: “May the spirit of your deeds remain with us forever! Norway’s guardian spirit, Henrik Wergeland!” – these are the closing lines which Grieg, following the death tolls of the preceding bars, comments with a triumphant outburst.

Inspiration in Hardanger

Although Edvard Grieg consistently fought the accusation of “Norwegianising” in his music, he – particularly during less creative periods – made the most of his position as a Norwegian national composer. His *Six Orchestral Songs* already reveal a solemn mood and an emotive idealisation of the patriotic Wergeland. However, the orchestral transcriptions of his *Lyric Pieces* for piano, published in ten volumes between 1867 and 1901, also demonstrate that he was mainly interested in Nordic moods and sonic landscapes, whilst he left aside less nationally oriented numbers. *Evening in the mountains*, the opening piece of the **Lyric Pieces, Op. 68**, of 1899 is, in the orchestral version, an effective image of man’s complete isolation within the grandeur of nature. The shepherd’s melody on the oboe is echoed by the entire string section, spinning

out the simple tune (which is faintly reminiscent of the cor anglais in Act III of Wagner’s *Tristan and Isolde*) into an impassioned plaint. “It was like a vision. Even I was overwhelmed”, the composer commented after a performance of the work which he had directed himself. However, for the lullaby, arranged for (partially muted) strings, he returns to the longing tone of Solveig from *Peer Gynt*.

Grieg had lived in Kristiania (today’s Oslo) for a good ten years from 1866 until early 1877, founded the first Norwegian Music Academy and, as the conductor of the Philharmonic Society, enlivened the city’s concert life by presenting innovative programmes stretching from Baroque repertoire to contemporary music. The violinist and glowing patriot Ole Bull, who introduced Grieg to Norwegian folk music, proved to be an invaluable source of musical inspiration: a completely unused stock of melodies and tonal systems opened up before the young composer, coming to fruition for the first time in his Piano Concerto of 1868. Perhaps it was due to problems with the audience in Kristiania as well as a need to be closer to the origins of these melodies which led Grieg and his wife Nina to travel to the West Norwegian countryside in 1877. In Hardanger, between fjords and glaciers, they found lodgings in the small town of Lofthus where Grieg composed his string quartet as well as piano and vocal works – including the only original orchestral song, the ballad for baritone, ***Den Bergtekne*** (The Mountain Thrall).

As with many works, grand designs had been made for the ballad; however, what remained from the planned large-scale choral piece was a short, but intensive, work, abruptly opening with a diminished chord and only then presenting the main theme in the horn. It is the motif of wandering aimlessly (Andante) which leads the narrator through dark woods and into the arms of elf-women (Allegro agitato). Fulfilment and good fortune, as illustrated by Grieg in the major-key middle section (Poco mosso), however, do not form part of the wanderer’s journey: his life remains without direction or love. And there seems to be an indication that the composer, who suffered from a difficult relationship with Nina, portrayed himself in this piece – with seemingly resigned music, dominated by the sound of the much-divided strings.

Grieg’s persuasion of not having found true love in his life was compounded by permanent creative crises. “I have lost the strength for great forms”, he

lamented, writing to a friend from the idyll of Lofthus. And whenever his Leipzig publisher Max Abraham called for a “work of significant form and content”, a creative block was the inevitable consequence. At least the peace of Lofthus was sufficiently relaxing and inspiring for Grieg to be able to complete his **Norwegian Dances, Op. 35**, for piano for four hands in the summer of 1881. In contrast to Johannes Brahms or Antonín Dvořák, who had newly invented their Hungarian and Slavonic Dances in the spirit of these respective dance types, Grieg drew on the collection of *Older and Newer Norwegian Mountain Melodies*, published from 1853 by the organist Ludvig Mathias Lindeman. This time, Grieg left the instrumentation to others, the most popular version today being that of the Czech conductor and violist Hans Sitt, commissioned by the Leipzig publisher – Grieg accepted it reluctantly.

The snappy melody of the first dance is called *Sinclair's March* in Lindeman's collection which may be a wink towards Grieg's Scottish heritage (the original spelling of his family name was “Greig”). The march theme is used to great effect in the manner of symphonic scherzos, and even spun out with variations in the *cantabile* central section. The remaining three dances correspond to the Halling, a solo dance in moderate tempo performed by men. The second dance saunters along without haste and with delicate phrasing – not without an outburst in the middle section, this time a rapid Allegro. Another march with many surprising accents also characterises the third dance; the theme is varied once again in the elegiacally-hued *Tranquillo* section. The final dance surely has the most intriguing structure: the unusual introduction, appearing “slow” despite the swift tempo, presents a theme in the bass register which later returns in the calm central section; the bold call of the horn and oboe already hints at the Halling theme of the fast main section. After a repeat of the Presto section, Grieg lays on a coda which brings the entire cycle to a brilliant close.

Michael Struck-Schloen
Translation: Viola Scheffel



Vol. I

Symphonic Dances, Op. 64
Peer Gynt Suites No. 1 & 2
Funeral March

audite 92.651 (SACD)



Vol. II

Two Elegiac Melodies, Op. 34
From Holberg's Time, Op. 40
Two Melodies, Op. 53
Two Nordic Melodies, Op. 63

audite 92.579 (SACD)



Vol. III

Concert Overture 'In Autumn'
Lyric Suite • Klokkeklang
Old Norwegian Melody
Three Orchestral Pieces

audite 92.669 (SACD)



Vol. IV

Symphony in C minor, EG 119
Piano Concerto, Op. 16

audite 92.670 (SACD)

CAMILLA TILLING

A graduate of both the University of Gothenburg and London's Royal College of Music, Camilla Tilling made an early debut at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden as Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), a role she went on to sing at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre, La Monnaie and the Munich Festival. An ongoing relationship with the Royal Opera House has seen her return as Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Dorinda (*Orlando*), Oscar (*Un ballo in maschera*), Arminda (*La finta giardiniera*), Gretel (*Hansel und Gretel*) and most recently as Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*). At The Metropolitan Opera she has appeared as both Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) and Nannetta (*Falstaff*). As Susanna she has performed at the San Francisco Opera, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Bayerische Staatsoper, and Opéra National de Paris. With the vocal flexibility to embrace a diverse repertoire, Camilla Tilling has enjoyed success as the Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*) at The Glyndebourne Festival, as l'Ange (*Saint François d'Assise*) at De Nederlandse Opera, as Mélisande (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) at Teatro Real Madrid and in her house debut at Sächsische Staatsoper Dresden, as Euridice (*Orfeo ed Euridice*) at Salzburg Mozartwoche, and as Donna Clara (*Der Zwerg*) at Bayerische Staatsoper. Most recently Camilla returned to Opéra national de Paris as Pamina and sang her first Contessa (*Le nozze di Figaro*) at Drottningholms Slottsteater.

A highly regarded concert performer, Camilla Tilling is a regular guest of the Berliner Philharmoniker, Orchestre de Paris, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, NDR Sinfonieorchester and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Recent highlights include Berg's *Sieben frühe Lieder* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Lionel Bringuier, Strauss' *Vier letzte Lieder* at the Salzburg Festival with the Philharmonia Orchestra under Christoph von Dohnányi, Mahler's Symphony No.4 at the BBC Proms with the London Symphony Orchestra and Bernard Haitink, with the Orchestre National de France under Robin Ticciati and with the Vienna Symphony under Philippe Jordan. Recent performances with the Berliner Philharmoniker include Beethoven's Symphony No.9 at Berlin's Waldbühne under Sir Simon Rattle, *La resurrezione* under Emmanuelle Haïm, and Peter Sellars' highly-acclaimed production of St. Matthew Passion in Lucerne, London and New York.



TOM ERIK LIE

Tom Erik Lie was born in Oslo and studied singing from 1986 to 1991 at the Conservatory and at the State Opera Academy in Oslo. In 1991 his first engagement led him to Düsseldorf. From 1993 to 1998 Tom Erik Lie was engaged in Gelsenkirchen. In 1995 he received the Ingrid Bjoner Scholarship for young Singers. Guest engagements followed in Hannover, Essen, Nürnberg, Bonn, Leipzig and Dresden. From 1998 to 2001 Tom Erik Lie was a member of the ensemble at the opera in Leipzig. Here he sang Frère Léon in the German première of Messiaens *Saint François d'Assise*, Guglielmo, Papageno, Siegfried in Schumann's *Genoveva* and Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*, a part which he also sang at the Royal Opera Copenhagen. As Don Giovanni and Robert Storch (in *Intermezzo* by R. Strauss) he had great success at Garsington Opera Festival. From 2001 to 2004 he was engaged at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, where he sang Papageno, Wolfram, Sharpless, Albert, Schaunard and Frère Léon. At the Komische Oper Berlin he had his debut in 2003 as Edwin in *Die Csárdásfürstin*. Since 2004 he is a member of the ensemble there, and sings Marcello (*La Bohème*), Count Almaviva (*The marriage of Figaro*), the title parts in *Eugene Onegin* and *Don Giovanni*, Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*), Papageno (*The Magic Flute*), Gabriel von Eisenstein (*Die Fledermaus*), Prince Jeletzky (*Pique Dame*), Beckmesser (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) and Horatio in Christian Jost' *Hamlet* (world premiere). In 2010 Tom Erik Lie sang the part of Phileas Fogg in Oslo in the premiere of *In 80 Days around the World* by Gisle Kverndokk.

Tom Erik Lie has sung numerous concerts in Europe, Asia and the USA with conductors like Christian Thieleman, Kirill Petrenko, Sir André Previn, Michael Jurowsky, Marcello Viotti, Paolo Carignani, Friedeman Layer, Mark Albrecht, Jiri Kout and Peter Schneider.





The **WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne** was formed in 1947 as part of the then North West German Radio (NWDR) and nowadays belongs to the West German Radio (WDR). Principal conductors were Christoph von Dohnányi, Zdenek Macal, Hiroshi Wakasugi, Gary Bertini, Hans Vonk and Semyon Bychkov. Celebrated guest conductors such as Fritz Busch, Erich Kleiber, Otto Klemperer, Karl Böhm, Herbert von Karajan, Günter Wand, Sir Georg Solti, Sir André Previn, Lorin Maazel, Claudio Abbado and Zubin Mehta have performed with the orchestra. The WDR Symphony Orchestra tours regularly in all European countries, in North and South America and in Asia. Since the season 2010/2011 Jukka-Pekka Saraste from Finland is the Chief Conductor of the orchestra.



EIVIND AADLAND

Eivind Aadland has been Chief Conductor and Artistic Leader of the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra from 2003 to 2010. In addition, he has worked with many other Scandinavian orchestras, including the Oslo and Bergen Philharmonics, the Stavanger Symphony, the Finnish and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestras and the Swedish Chamber Orchestra. He is also a frequent visitor to other European orchestras such as the WDR Cologne, SWR Stuttgart and the RSO Berlin; he has appeared with the Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse, Royal Flemish Philharmonic, the Lausanne and Scottish Chamber Orchestras and the Symphony Orchestras of Melbourne, Tasmania and Iceland. Concert tours led Eivind Aadland to China, Korea and Australia.

His recording output includes a diverse range of repertoire putting a special focus on Norwegian composers.

Previously a violinist having studied with Yehudi Menuhin, Eivind Aadland was concertmaster of the Bergen Philharmonic from 1981 to 1989 and Music Director of the European Union Chamber Orchestra from 1987 to 1997. Then he devoted himself to conducting completely and studied with Jorma Panula.

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