

Carl Nielsen

New York Philharmonic
Alan Gilbert

The Symphonies & Concertos

NEW YORK
PHILHARMONIC

DACAPÓ



Carl Nielsen (1865–1931)

The Symphonies & Concertos

New York Philharmonic

Alan Gilbert, Music Director & Conductor

Nikolaj Znaider, violin

Robert Langevin, flute

Anthony McGill, clarinet

CD 1

Symphony No. 3, CNW 27, “Sinfonia espansiva” (1910–11) 37:15

1 I. Allegro espansivo 11:24

2 II. Andante pastorale * 9:12

3 III. Allegretto un poco 6:36

4 IV. Finale: Allegro 10:03

* Erin Morley, soprano; Joshua Hopkins, baritone

Symphony No. 2, CNW 26, “The Four Temperaments” (1901–02) 35:08

5 I. Allegro collerico 10:13

6 II. Allegro comodo e flemmatico 5:08

7 III. Andante malincolico 12:19

8 IV. Allegro sanguineo 7:28

TOTAL: 72:23

Recorded in concert

CD 2

Symphony No. 4, CNW 28, “The Inextinguishable” (1914–16) 35:57

- 1 I. Allegro 11:28
- 2 II. Poco allegretto 5:16
- 3 III. Poco adagio quasi andante 10:10
- 4 IV. Allegro 9:01

Markus Rhoten, timpani I; Kyle Zerna, timpani II

Symphony No. 1, CNW 25 (1889–94) 33:18

- 5 I. Allegro orgoglioso 9:09
- 6 II. Andante 7:17
- 7 III. Allegro comodo 8:04
- 8 IV. Finale: Allegro con fuoco 8:47

TOTAL: 69:20

Recorded in concert

CD 3

Symphony No. 5, CNW 29 (1920–22) 36:57

- 1 I. Tempo giusto – 10:27
- 2 Adagio 9:39
- 3 II. Allegro – 6:07
- 4 Presto 3:04
- 5 Andante poco tranquillo – 4:43
- 6 Allegro (Tempo I) 2:58

Mark Nuccio, clarinet; Christopher S. Lamb, snare drum

Symphony No. 6, CNW 30, “Sinfonia semplice” (1924–25) 34:28

- 7 I. Tempo giusto 13:21
- 8 II. Humoresque. Allegretto 4:21
- 9 III. Proposta seria. Adagio 6:10
- 10 IV. Theme and Variations. Allegro 10:37

TOTAL: 71:25

Recorded in concert

CD 4

	Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, CNW 41 (1911–12)	35:08
1	I. Prelude: Largo – Allegro cavalleresco	18:43
2	II. Poco adagio –	:6:19
3	Rondo: Allegretto scherzando	10:06
	Concerto for Flute and Orchestra, CNW 42 (1926)	18:16
4	I. Allegro moderato	10:55
5	II. Allegretto, un poco	:7:21
	George Curran, bass trombone	
	Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, CNW 43 (1928)	23:52
6	Allegretto un poco –	:8:08
7	Poco adagio –	:4:49
8	Allegro non troppo – Adagio – Allegro vivace	10:55
	Christopher S. Lamb, snare drum	
		TOTAL: 77:16

Recorded in concert

STRONG, BEAUTIFUL, AND INDEPENDENT *by Jens Cornelius*

Carl Nielsen comes from “the North,” but that does not mean that his music is chilly. You need pressure on the boilers in his music, which gets straight to the point. “I think it’s really full-blooded, passionate, dramatic, and, ultimately, human music. That’s what I’m going for, and that’s what the Philharmonic is good at,” says Alan Gilbert, the music director of the New York Philharmonic. After living in Scandinavia for a number of years Alan Gillbert knows the roots of this music. “Carl Nielsen’s music is based on classic traditions, but it’s just so Danish! Strong, beautiful, and independent,” he says.

So where does this music come from? Throughout his life Carl Nielsen emphasized how important it was that he had been raised in the countryside. He was born on the island of Funen in 1865 in poor circumstances. He was taught to play violin and trumpet by his father and at the age of 14 worked as a regimental musician. Benefactors pooled their resources to send the young man to Copenhagen, where he was admitted to the Academy of Music as a violinist, and in 1889 he won the competition for a permanent position in the Royal Danish Orchestra. In just ten years he had moved from poverty without prospects to the cultural elite of the capital.

In 1905 Nielsen resigned from his orchestral post to concentrate entirely on composing. Over the years he achieved the status as “Denmark’s national composer,” but constantly challenged himself and his audience. The late works complete the picture of an artistic development that was always ahead of the musical scene surrounding Nielsen. To this we must add Nielsen’s profoundly original tonal idiom, at once quirky, straightforward, and visionary, which makes it hard to place his music in the usual stylistic and historical categories. “It’s very difficult to pin Nielsen down,” says Alan Gilbert. “His music can be exciting and fun, but also bleak and austere. He likes to juxtapose highly contrasting images, and sudden switches are characteristic. What’s coming next? I like to read it that he is painting a picture of life.”

Carl Nielsen’s six symphonies and three solo concertos form the core of his orchestral music. Each relates to the classical tradition in its own very personal way. At the same time they show how Nielsen developed and increasingly moved away from the conventions. It is a long way from the robust upstart you encounter in the First Symphony to the atonal experiments in the Sixth Symphony and the Clarinet Concerto. But the common thread is always present – as it also is in the individual

works, however surprisingly they unfold. In a comment on the wide span between the introduction to and ending of his Violin Concerto, Nielsen said: "The spirit is pretty much the same." That is precisely what makes Carl Nielsen such a strong composer: he is always himself, true to his spirit.

Symphony No. 1 (1889–94)

Nielsen skips the conventions from the very first chord in his First Symphony. Here we meet a true strongman who expresses himself in succinct phrases and with powerful gusts of breath. The music is classically formed, but literally "unpolished," partly because Nielsen did not yet have a fully honed technique, partly because he was trying to get away from the academic standards.

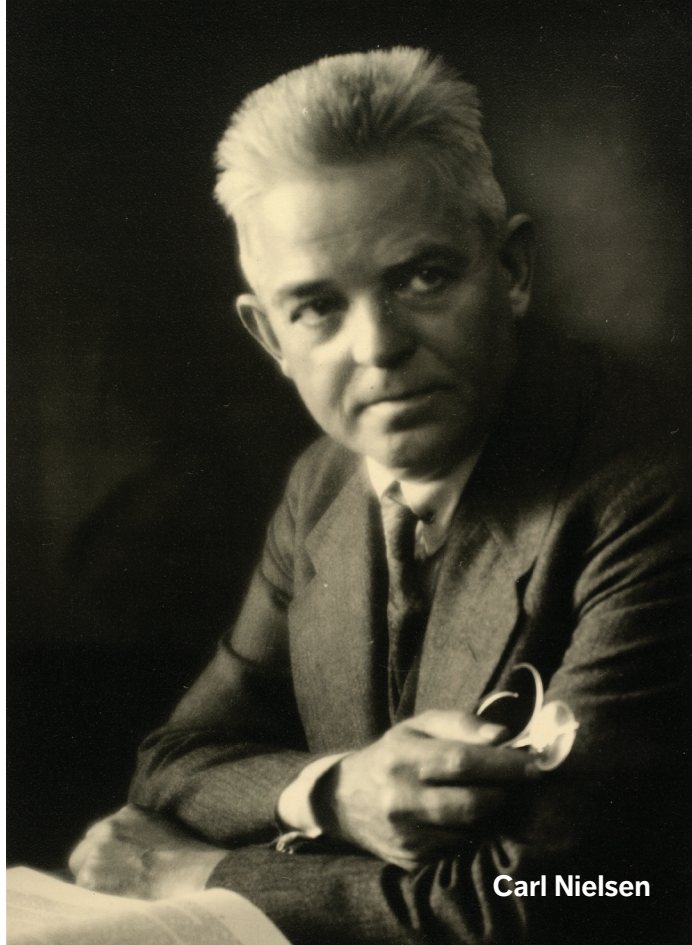
The need to escape also applies to something as fundamental as the relationship between major and minor. With ambivalence elevated to a principle, the symphonic ground plan is ruptured, and the symphony ends in a different key from its beginning! In the last movement the strife between the two forces blazes up, but in the second movement, too, major and minor are on unstable ground. Here the pastoral idyll of the music grows into a truly pagan, nature-worshipping revelation of light and landscape.

"A work that seems to promise a coming storm of genius," wrote a critic, "as strangely innocent and unconscious as if one saw a child playing with dynamite."

Symphony No. 2 "The Four Temperaments" (1901–02)

Carl Nielsen got the idea for the symphony during a visit to a country inn: "On the wall there hung a highly comical picture in which "the temperaments" were shown. The Choleric had a long sword in his hand, with which he fenced wildly in empty air, his hair streaming crazily around his face, which was so distorted by anger and diabolical hatred that I involuntarily burst out laughing. The other three pictures were in the same style, and my friends and I were heartily amused by the pictures' exaggerated expressions and comical seriousness. But how strangely things may often turn out! One fine day I realized that these shoddy pictures contained a musical undercurrent!"

The four characters correspond to the movements in a symphony. The choleric person is, of course, the energetic introduction, the phlegmatic one is a brief interlude, and the melancholy movement is the dark section of the symphony. In the final movement the sanguine character gallops out happily along the highway, but forgets in his short-sightedness where he is going.



Carl Nielsen

Symphony No. 3 “Sinfonia espansiva” (1910–11)

The Third Symphony became Carl Nielsen’s breakthrough with audiences and critics alike. The first movement is captivating, in a class by itself, and with irregular lashes it whips the music into motion with so much energy that the movement carries on under its own steam. Nielsen decided to let the name of the first movement, *Allegro espansivo*, apply to the whole symphony. *Sinfonia espansiva* is an image of development and growth.

In the second movement we find ourselves in a pristine landscape of paradisiac calm. Nielsen adds the voices of a man and a woman, mixing wordlessly and meditatively with the music. The contrast comes with worries and restlessness in the third movement, before the development narrative of the symphony lands in the fourth movement, in a tribute to the activities of humanity on the Earth. Irresistibly, a melody makes its way forward as if it were a community song for symphony orchestra. “A hymn to work and the healthy development of everyday life” was Nielsen’s own description of the final movement.

Symphony No. 4 “The Inextinguishable” (1914–16)

The epoch-making Fourth Symphony was written in the midst of World War I, and it is highly tempting to hear the violent music as the sound of war. Carl Nielsen’s own explanation was more abstract: he saw the symphony as an expression of the eternal will to life. “Music is life, and, like it, inextinguishable” is the motto of the symphony.

The first movement begins with a “Big Bang” that casts all its particles out into space with no clear idea of how they will coalesce. A slow, descending theme in the woodwinds seems like a respite, but develops surprisingly into the symphony’s inextinguishable victory motto.

The idyll in the second movement ends in a rupture, and the intense third section of the symphony is a monologue that struggles with deep despair. Out of the darkness a flame then shoots up – played by unison strings. This leads into the climax of the symphony: the last section with the famous duel between two timpanists. The effect is chaotic, until the inextinguishable theme from the first movement wins the victory in some of the most ecstatic music Nielsen ever wrote.

Symphony No. 5 (1922)

Carl Nielsen’s Fifth Symphony is one of the most visionary of the twentieth century, a cosmic battle between light and darkness. The first part of the symphony is a primal state in which two themes

that emerge from the introductory flow in the violas hold each other in check. The balance of tensions is broken by a snare drum whose improvisation attempts to destroy the surroundings. The struggle grows into a *ragnarok* which ends on the side of light. But the balance between the forces has not changed.

The second part of the symphony wants to create something new. An ambitious theme manically takes up the challenges, but turns out to lack stamina, and a diabolical fugue splits apart rather than builds up. Only then does the main subject of the movement return, this time *pianissimo*, and in serene polyphony opens up for a magical journey toward the light.

In the 1920s the symphony was performed by famous conductors such as Wilhelm Furtwängler and Pierre Monteux. The definitive breakthrough came in 1962, when it was recorded by the New York Philharmonic and Leonard Bernstein.

Symphony No. 6 “Sinfonia semplice” (1924–25)

On its face, the title “Simple Symphony” refers to the work’s naive themes, transparency, and classic division into four movements. But there is a profound irony in the music: it contradicts itself from start to finish. In the first movement a complexity quickly arises that makes the “simplicity” ring false, and the movement culminates in a searing dissonance. In the extreme Humoresque, the instruments are unleashed in anarchy, and the trombone scornfully shoots down the clarinet’s rescue bid. Cut to the neo-Baroque third movement, which painfully tries to create unity with the aid of classical part-writing – in vain, as the last movement sweeps everything away with a succession of unruly variations. The final collapse comes in a grotesque waltz in which the chaotic eruptions of the brass make the music cannibalize itself.

It is with a harsh and provocative deconstruction that Nielsen ends his series of symphonies: a challenging of his own artistic boundaries and, in particular, of the role as canonized national composer, one that he had no wish to fill.

Violin Concerto (1911–12)

Unconventional it is, yet Nielsen’s Violin Concerto also counts as one of his most typical works. It begins grandiloquently, ends in frivolity, and along the way it closely juxtaposes contrasting characters. The work is formed in two large halves, each of which is divided into a slow and a fast section – an unusual but clear structure.

The first movement begins with a long, ambitious solo cadenza and continues to an energetic main section named *Allegro cavallerésco*, that is to say, chivalrous and proud. The violin emerges as a conqueror who knows his worth. The introduction to the second part is a chromatic exploration of the borderland between major and minor, beginning with the theme of the oboe over the notes B–A–C–H. This intense section carries on abruptly into a teasing rondo, where the composer’s inner folk fiddler is unleashed. Nielsen, one of the greatest humorists of classical music, described the final movement as “a kind of half-cute, half-cheerful rickety movement, almost without willpower, but good-natured and engaging like a warmly smiling layabout at his best.”

Flute Concerto (1926)

The Flute Concerto is a marvellous example of Carl Nielsen’s late style: restless but precise, with a shrewd humour but a warm heart. Once more the concerto is given a twofold structure, but tightened up considerably. It begins flickeringly, with a slight frisson of hysteria. Marching timpani and a threatening bass trombone make the soloist screech like a bird that has caught sight of a predator. Then the orchestra settles on a theme that at last gives the flute peace of mind. “The flute prefers the pastoral moods; the composer therefore has to adapt to its gentle nature if he will not risk being branded as a barbarian,” Carl Nielsen wrote. The second movement tries to put the conflicts behind it, but soon the flute must conform to its nature with a melancholy Adagio theme. How is this to end? In wonderfully bizarre fashion Nielsen lets the swaggering trombone pilot the whole work into harbor with the pastoral theme from the first part. The flute is perplexed at its betrothal with its odd partner, but the point is typical of Carl Nielsen: agreement is not necessarily bliss; fertile contrasts make for brilliance and excitement.

Clarinet Concerto (1928)

Carl Nielsen’s Clarinet Concerto is the most important clarinet concerto of the twentieth century – a radical work with atonal tendencies, with an important secondary role for the snare drum, which alternately stirs up and splits apart. The main opponent of the clarinet is, however, its own temperament, and after just a few minutes the lid is blown off the kettle in a choleric cadenza.

The starting point is the lurking initial subject in cellos and basses. The second main subject is *poco adagio* and exhibits a deep melancholy that becomes more intense each time it appears. It is more painful even than the satanic march passages in the concerto. In the last section the clarinet

pulls out a teasing folk-dance-like motif. That lightens things up, but even though the Concerto is rounded off in a kind of spirit of conciliation, it never achieves true serenity. At the first performance in 1928 there were few who could see any future for Nielsen’s most envelope-pushing work hitherto. That delighted Carl Nielsen: “It shows after all that one is not quite sacrosanct yet, that one is still alive and has hope and possibilities for development,” he said, with a smile, in a newspaper comment.

THE PERFORMERS

Music Director **Alan Gilbert** began his New York Philharmonic tenure in September 2009, the first native New Yorker in the post. He and the Philharmonic have introduced the positions of The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence, The Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence, and the Artist-in-Association; *CONTACT!*, the new-music series; and the NY PHIL BIENNIAL, an exploration of today’s music by a wide range of contemporary and modern composers inaugurated in spring 2014. As *New York* magazine wrote, “The Philharmonic and its music director Alan Gilbert have turned themselves into a force of permanent revolution.”

In the 2014–15 season Alan Gilbert conducts the U.S. Premiere of Unsuk Chin’s Clarinet Concerto, a Philharmonic co-commission, alongside Mahler’s First Symphony; the Verdi Requiem; a staging of Honegger’s *Joan of Arc at the Stake*, featuring Marion Cotillard; World Premieres; a *CONTACT!* program; and Yo–Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble. He concludes The Nielsen Project – the multi-year initiative to perform and record the Danish composer’s symphonies and concertos – and presides over the EUROPE / SPRING 2015 tour. His Philharmonic-tenure highlights include acclaimed productions of Ligeti’s *Le Grand Macabre*, Janáček’s *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Stephen Sondheim’s *Sweeney Todd* starring Bryn Terfel and Emma Thompson, and *Philharmonic 360* at Park Avenue Armory; World Premieres; Bach’s B-minor Mass and Ives’s Fourth Symphony; the score from *2001: A Space Odyssey* alongside the film; Mahler’s Second Symphony, *Resurrection*, on the tenth anniversary of 9/11; and nine tours around the world.

Conductor laureate of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra and principal guest conductor of Hamburg’s NDR Symphony Orchestra, Alan Gilbert regularly conducts leading orchestras around the world, and has collaborated on Grammy-winning recordings. He is Director of Conducting and Orchestral Studies at The Juilliard School, where he holds the William Schuman Chair in Musical Studies. His honors include being elected to The American Academy of Arts & Sciences in 2014.



Alan Gilbert

Nikolaj Znaider is one of the foremost violinists of today and combines a soloist career at the very highest level with a growing conducting career. A wonderfully versatile musician, Mr. Znaider has established his conductor credentials over the last several seasons, and is increasingly in demand from many of the world's leading orchestras. Mr. Znaider is Principal Guest Conductor of the Mariinsky Orchestra in St. Petersburg and a regular guest conductor with orchestras around the world. As a soloist, Mr. Znaider also continues to perform regularly with the world's leading orchestras. Highlights of the coming season include performances with the Vienna Philharmonic, Bayerischer Rundfunk and Cleveland Orchestras with Franz Welser-Möst, a return to the Los Angeles Philharmonic with Andrey Boreyko, and the Staatskapelle Dresden with Christian Thielemann. Recording highlights of recent years are Elgar's Violin Concerto with the late Sir Colin Davis and the Staatskapelle Dresden, and award-winning recordings of Brahms's and Korngold's concertos with the Vienna Philharmonic and Valery Gergiev. He has also recorded the complete works for violin and piano of Johannes Brahms with Yefim Bronfman.

New York Philharmonic Principal Flute **Robert Langevin**, The Lila Acheson Wallace Chair, made his Philharmonic debut in 2001 in the North American premiere of Siegfried Matthus's Concerto for Flute and Harp. Previously he served as principal flute of the Pittsburgh Symphony, associate principal of the Montreal Symphony, a member of Musica Camerata Montreal and l'Ensemble de la Société de Musique Contemporaine du Québec, and an adjunct professor at Duquesne University. He has performed as soloist with Quebec's most distinguished ensembles and recorded programs for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The Quebec native studied at the Montreal Conservatory of Music, graduating with two first prizes. His honors include the Prix d'Europe and second prize at the 1980 Budapest International Competition. Mr. Langevin has given recitals and master classes throughout North and South America, Europe, and Asia, including in North Korea and Vietnam. He is on the faculties of The Juilliard School, Manhattan School of Music, and Orford International Summer Festival.



Alan Gilbert and Nikolaj Znaider

Anthony McGill — who joined the New York Philharmonic as Principal Clarinet, The Edna and W. Van Alan Clark Chair, after serving as principal clarinet of The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra — has appeared with the MET and New York String Orchestras; American, Baltimore, and San Diego symphony orchestras; and Orchestra 2001. His chamber music collaborations have included the Guarneri, Tokyo, and Brentano quartets; performances with Ax, Bronfman, Uchida, Lang Lang, Gil Shaham, and Midori; appearances with Musicians from Marlboro and Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center; and at the Tanglewood, Marlboro, Music@Menlo, and Santa Fe Chamber Music festivals. He performed with Perlman, Ma, and Montero at the 2009 inauguration of President Barack Obama, and appeared on *Performance Today*, MPR's *Saint Paul Sunday*, *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, *NBC Nightly News*, *Steve Harvey Show*, and on MSNBC. Mr. McGill serves on the faculties of The Juilliard School, Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University, Bard College Conservatory of Music, and Manhattan School of Music.

Erin Morley, one of today's most in-demand lyric coloratura sopranos, received wide press and acclaim through her breakthrough performance as Marguerite de Valois in *Les Huguenots* at Bard SummerScape. She has been associated with the New York Philharmonic on a number of projects including Mahler's Symphony No. 4, Lerner & Loewe's *Camelot* (as Nimue), Orff's *Carmina burana*, and Honegger's *Joan of Arc at the Stake* (the Virgin), as well as Nielsen's Symphony No. 3. Ms. Morley has sung leading roles at The Metropolitan Opera, Opéra National de Paris, Wiener Staatsoper, and Bayerische Staatsoper, among others.

Chosen by *Opera News* as one of twenty-five artists poised to become a major force in the next decade, Canadian baritone **Joshua Hopkins** has worked with Marin Alsop, Andrew Davis, Hans Graf, Bernard Labadie, Paul McCreesh, Andris Nelsons, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and Robert Spano, and has appeared with the Gulbenkian Foundation, Les Violons du Roy, Orchestra of St. Luke's, and Cleveland, Philadelphia, Toronto, and Verbier Festival orchestras. Mr. Hopkins has given recitals across North America, including at Carnegie Hall, and his first recital disc, *Let Beauty Awake*, is on the ATMA Classique label.



Robert Langevin, Alan Gilbert and New York Philharmonic



Anthony McGill, New York Philharmonic and Alan Gilbert

The **New York Philharmonic** plays a leading cultural role in New York City, the United States, and the world. This season's projects will connect the Philharmonic with up to 50 million music lovers through live concerts in New York City and on its worldwide tours; digital downloads; international broadcasts on television, radio, and online; and as a resource through its wide range of education programs.

The Orchestra has commissioned and/or premiered works by leading composers from every era since its founding in 1842 — including Dvořák's *New World Symphony*, Copland's *Connotations*, and John Adams's Pulitzer Prize-winning *On the Transmigration of Souls*, dedicated to the victims of 9/11.

Renowned around the globe, the Philharmonic has appeared in 432 cities in 63 countries — including the 1930 tour of Europe; the 1959 tour to the USSR; the 2008 visit to Pyongyang, D.P.R.K., the first there by an American orchestra; and the Orchestra's debut in Hanoi, Vietnam, in 2009. A resource for its community and the world, the Philharmonic complements its annual free citywide Concerts in the Parks with wide-ranging education programs — among them the famed, long-running Young People's Concerts and Philharmonic Schools, an immersive classroom program that reaches thousands of New York City students. Committed to developing tomorrow's leading orchestral musicians, the Philharmonic has established the New York Philharmonic Global Academy, partnerships at home and abroad that combine performance with intensive training by Philharmonic musicians. These include collaborations with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra and Shanghai Conservatory of Music as well as Santa Barbara's Music Academy of the West.

The oldest American symphony orchestra and one of the oldest in the world, the New York Philharmonic has made almost 2,000 recordings since 1917, including several Grammy Award winners, and its self-produced download series continues in the 2014–15 season. Alan Gilbert became Music Director in 2009, succeeding 20th-century musical giants including Bernstein, Toscanini, and Mahler. nyphil.org

Carl Nielsen kommer fra Norden, men det betyder ikke, at hans musik er kølig. Der skal tryk på kedlerne i hans musik, som taler uden omsvøb. "Det er fuldblods musik, lidenskabelig, dramatisk og meget menneskelig. Det er hvad jeg går efter, og det er netop hvad New York Filharmonikerne er gode til," siger New York Filharmonikernes chefdirigent Alan Gilbert. Efter at have boet i Skandinavien en årrække kender Alan Gilbert musikkens rødder. "Carl Niensens musik bygger på klassiske traditioner, men den er bare så dansk! Stærk, smuk og selvstændig," fortæller han.

Hvad udspringer denne musik så af? Carl Nielsen fremhævede hele livet sin landlige opvækst. Han var født på Fyn i 1865 under fattige forhold. Lærte at spille violin og trompet af sin far og fik 14 år gammel arbejde som regimentsmusiker. Velgørere gik sammen om at sende den unge mand til København, hvor han blev optaget på konservatoriet som violinist, og i 1889 vandt han konkurrencen om en fast stilling i Det Kgl. Kapel. På bare ti år havde han bevæget sig fra udsigtsløs fattigdom til hovedstadens kulturelite.

I 1905 opsigde Nielsen sin orkesterplads for at koncentrere sig helt om at komponere. Han fik med årene status som Danmarks nationalkomponist, men udfordrede konstant sig selv og sit publikum. De sene værker fuldender billedet af en kunstnerisk udvikling, som hele tiden var forud for omgivelserne. Dertil kommer Niensens dybt originale tonesprog, som på én gang er krøllet, ligefremt og visionært og gør det svært at placere hans musik i de sædvanlige stilistiske og historiske kategorier. "Det er svært at sætte etiketter på Nielsen," siger Alan Gilbert. "Nogle gange er hans musik spændende og sjov, andre gange trøstesløs og tilknappet. Han kan lide at sætte meget forskellige billeder op mod hinanden, og han laver pludselige ryk på en meget karakteristisk måde. Hvad bliver det næste? Som jeg ser det, maler han et billede af livet."

Carl Niensens seks symfonier og tre solokoncerter udgør kernen af hans orkestermusik. De forholder sig til den klassiske tradition på hver sin meget personlige måde. Samtidig viser de, hvordan Nielsen udviklede sig og i stigende grad fjernede sig fra konventionerne. Der er langt fra den robuste opkomling, man møder i 1. Symfoni, til de atonale eksperimenter i 6. Symfoni og Klarinetkoncerten. Men den røde tråd er der – som den også er der i de enkelte værker, hvor overraskende de end forløber. I en kommentar til det store spænd mellem indledningen og afslutningen af sin

Violinkoncert sagde Nielsen, at "Aanden er omtrent den samme." Netop det gør Carl Nielsen til så stærk en komponist: Han er er altid sig selv, tro mod sin ånd.

Symfoni nr. 1 (1889-94)

Nielsen springer konventionerne over fra første akkord i sin 1. Symfoni. Her møder man en ægte kraftkarl, der udtrykker sig i korte fraser og med heftige åndedrag. Musikken er klassisk formet, men bogstavelig talt "ubehøvet," dels fordi Nielsen endnu ikke havde en fuldt poleret teknik, dels fordi han søgte væk fra netop de akademiske standarder.

Trangen til at slippe fri gælder også noget så grundlæggende som forholdet mellem dur og mol. Med tvetydigheden ophøjet til grundprincip sprænges den symfoniske grundplan, og symfonien ender i en anden toneart, end den begynder! I sidste sats står kampen mellem de to kræfter i lys lue, men også i 2. sats er dur og mol på gyngende grund. Her vokser musikkens pastorale idyl til en naturreligøse åbenbaring af lys og landskab.

"Et Arbejde som synes at forjætte et kommende Uvejr af Geni," skrev en kritiker, "saa forunderlig uskyldigt og ubevidst, som saa man et Barn lege med Dynamit."

Symfoni nr. 2 "De fire temperamenter" (1901-02)

Idéen til symfonien fik Carl Nielsen ved et besøg på en landsbykro: "Der hang på væggen et højt komisk billede, hvori "Temperamenterne" var fremstillet. Kolerikeren havde et langt Sværd i Haanden, hvormed han fægtede vildt ud i den tomme Luft, Haaret flagrede vanvittigt omkring hans Ansigt, der var i den Grad fortrukket af Vrede og djævelsk Had, at jeg uvilkaarligt brast i Latter. De andre tre Billeder var i samme Stil, og mine Venner og jeg morede os hjerteligt over Billedernes overdrevne Udtryk og komiske Alvor. Men hvor forunderligt som Tingene ofte kan forme sig! En skønne Dag gik det op for mig, at disse tarvelige Billeder indeholdt en musikalsk Undergrund!"

De fire karakterer svarer til satserne i en symfoni. Kolerikeren er naturligvis den handlekraftige indledning. Flegmatikeren er et kortfattet mellemspill, og den melankolske sats symfoniens mørke stund. I Finalen galopperer sangvinikeren glad ud ad landevejen, men glemmer i sin kortsynethed, hvor han er på vej hen.

Symfoni nr. 3 “Sinfonia espansiva” (1910-11)

Den 3. Symfoni blev Carl Nielsens gennembrud hos både publikum og kritikere. Førstesatsen er medrivende i en klasse for sig selv, og med uregelmæssige smæld slynger den musikken i gang med så megen energi, at satsen folder sig ud ved egen kraft. Satsbetegnelsen *Allegro espansivo* overførte Nielsen til at gælde for hele symfonien. *Sinfonia espansiva* er et billede på udvikling og vækst.

I andensatsen befinder man sig i en uberørt natur med paradisisk ro. Nielsen indfører en mands- og en kvindestemme, der ordløst og vegeterende blander sig i musikken. Modsætningen kommer med bekymringer og rastløshed i 3. sats, inden symfoniens udviklingsberetning lander i 4. sats, en hyldest til menneskets virke på Jorden. Uimodståeligt skrider en melodi frem, som var det en fælles-sang for symfoniorkester. “En Hymne til Arbejdet og det daglige Livs sunde Udfoldelse” var Nielsens egen beskrivelse af Finalen.

Symfoni nr. 4 “Det uudslekkelige” (1914-16)

Den skelsættende 4. Symfoni er skrevet midt under 1. Verdenskrig, og det er oplagt at høre den voldsomme musik som lyden af krig. Carl Nielsens egen forklaring var mere abstrakt: Han så symfonien som et udtryk for den evige vilje til liv. “Musik er liv, som dette uudslekkelig” er symfoniens motto.

1. sats indledes med et Big Bang, der slynger alle partikler ud i rummet uden nogen tydelig forestilling om, hvad det vil samle sig til. Et langsomt, faldende tema i træblæserne virker som en lise, men udvikler sig overraskende til det sejrende motiv.

Idyllen i 2. sats ender i et brud, og symfoniens intense 3. del er en monolog, der kæmper med stærk fortvivlelse. Ud af mørket springer så en flamme, spillet af unisone strygere. Det fører til symfoniens sidste afsnit med den berømte duel mellem to paukespillere. Virkningen er kaotisk, indtil det uudslekkelige tema fra 1. sats sejrer i noget af den mest ekstatiske musik, Nielsen nogensinde skrev.

Symfoni nr. 5 (1922)

Carl Nielsens 5. Symfoni er en af de mest visionære fra det 20. århundrede, en kosmisk kamp mellem lys og mørke. Symfoniens første del er en utilstand, hvor to temaer, der udspringer af den indledende strøm i bratscherne, holder hinanden i skak. Spændingsbalancen bliver brudt af en lille tromme, hvis improvisation forsøger at ødelægge omgivelserne. Kampen vokser til et ragnarok, som falder ud til lysets side. Men balancen mellem kræfterne har ikke ændret sig.

Anden del af symfonien vil skabe nyt. Et ærgerrigt tema tager manisk fat på udfordringerne, men viser sig at mangle udholdenhed, og en djævelsk fuga splitter i stedet for at bygge op. Først da vender satsens hovedtema tilbage, denne gang pianissimo, og i afklaret flerstemmighed åbnes for en magisk rejse mod lyset.

Symfonien blev i 1920'erne opført af berømte dirigenter som Wilhelm Furtwängler og Pierre Monteux. Det definitive gennembrud kom i 1962, da den blev indspillet af New York Filharmonikerne og Leonard Bernstein.

Symfoni nr. 6 “Sinfonia semplice” (1924-25)

Titlen “Enkel Symfoni” hentyder umiddelbart til de naive temaer, gennemsigtigheden og den klassiske inddeling i fire satser. Men der er en meget stærk ironi i musikken, som modsiger sig selv fra start til slut. I 1. sats melder der sig hurtigt en kompleksitet, der gør “enkelheden” falsk, og satsen kulminerer på en skærende dissonans. I den yderligtgående Humoreske slippes instrumenterne løs i et anarki, og trombonen skyder hånligt klarinettens redningsforsøg ned. Klip til den neobarokke 3. sats, der smerteligt vil skabe samling ved hjælp af klassisk statsteknik. Forgæves, fordi sidste sats fejer alt af banen med en række balstyriske variationer. Det endelige sammenbrud sker i en grotesk vals, hvor messingblæsernes kaotiske udbrud får musikken til at kannibalisere sig selv.

Det er en barsk og provokerende dekonstruktion, Nielsen slutter sin række af symfonier af med. En udfordring af hans egne kunstneriske grænser, men især af den rolle som kanoniseret nationalkomponist, han ikke ønskede at udfylde.

Violinkoncert (1911-12)

Nielsens ukonventionelle Violinkoncert er et af hans mest typiske værker. Den indledes højstemt, ender i frivolitet, og undervejs står kontrasterende karakterer tæt op af hinanden. Værket er formet i to store halvdele, som hver er delt i et langsomt og et hurtigt afsnit. En usædvanlig, men klar struktur.

1. sats begynder med en stor og stræbsom solokadence og fortsætter til et energisk hovedafsnit, betegnet *Allegro cavalleresco*, dvs. ridderlig og stolt. Violinen træder frem som en erobrere, der kender sit værd. 2. dels indledning er en kromatisk undersøgelse af grænselandet mellem dur og mol, der begynder med oboens tema over tonerne B-A-C-H. Dette intense afsnit går brat videre til en drilsk rondo, hvor den indre spillemand slippes løs. Nielsen, en af den klassiske musiks største

humorister, beskrev finalen som "en Slags halvsød, halvlystig, dinglevorn Sats, uden Villie næsten, men god og indtagende som en hjertelig smilende Drivert i sine bedste Øjeblikke."

Fløjtekoncert (1926)

Fløjtekoncerten er et pragteksempel på Carl Nielsens sene stil: Rastløs, men præcis, humoren skarp, men hjertet varmt. Igen er koncerten opbygget i en todelt form, dog strammet betydeligt op. Det begynder flagrende og småhysterisk. Marchpauker og en truende bastrombone får solisten til skrike som en fugl, der har øjnet et rovdyr. Så samler orkestret sig om et tema, der omsider giver fløjten sjælero. "Fløjten foretrækker de pastorale Stemninger; Komponisten er derfor nødt til at rette sig efter det blide Væsen, ifald han ikke vil risikere at stemples som en Barbar," skrev Carl Nielsen.

2. sats forsøger at lægge konflikterne bag sig, men snart må fløjten bekende sig til et sorgfuldt Adagio-tema. Hvordan skal det ende? Vidunderligt bizart lader Nielsen den brovtende basun styre hele værket i havn med det pastorale tema fra 1. del. Fløjten er perpleks over forlovelsen med den ulige partner, men pointen er typisk for Carl Nielsen: Enighed er ikke nødvendigvis lykken. Frødige modsætninger bringer liv og lyst.

Klarinetkoncert (1928)

Carl Nielsens Klarinetkoncert er den vigtigste klarinetkoncert fra det 20. århundrede. Et radikalt værk med atonale tendenser og med en vigtig birolle til lilletrommen, der skiftevis opdigner og splitter. Klarinettens hovedmodstander er dog dens eget temperament, og allerede efter et par minutter ryger låget helt af kedlen i en kolerisk kadence.

Udgangspunktet er det lurende begyndelsestema i cello og basser. Det andet hovedmotiv er *poco adagio* og rummer en dyb sørgmodighed, der smerter mere end selv koncertens sataniske marchpassager. I sidste afsnit hiver klarinetten en spillemandsmelodi frem – det letter, men selv om koncerten afrundes i en form for forsonlighed, kommer det aldrig til en egentlig afklaring.

Ved uropførelsen i 1928 var det kun få, der kunne se nogen fremtid for Nielsens hidtil mest grænsesøgende værk. Det glædede kun Nielsen: "Det viser jo, at man ikke er helt sakrosankt endnu, at man endnu er i live og har Håb og Udviklingsmuligheder," sagde han med et smil.

DE MEDVIRKENDE

Alan Gilbert har siden september 2009 været chefdirigent for og kunstnerisk leder af New York Philharmonic som den første indfødte new yorker på posten. Sammen med Filharmonikerne har han introduceret nye initiativer som The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence, The Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence, ny musik-serien *CONTACT!* og NY PHIL BIENNIAL, hvor Gilbert og orkestret går på opdagelse i musik af et bredt udvalg af nutidige komponister. Som *New York* magazine skrev, "Filharmonikerne og deres kunstneriske leder Alan Gilbert har forvandlet sig til en vedvarende revolutionerende kraft."

I 2014-15 sæsonen dirigerer Alan Gilbert den amerikanske førsteopførelse af Unsuks Chins Klarinetkoncert (bestilt af bl.a. orkestret selv) sammen med Mahlers Symfoni nr. 1, Verdis *Requiem*, en iscenesættelse af Honeggers *Jeanne d'Arc på bålet* med Oscar-vinderen Marion Cotillard, flere uropførelser, et *CONTACT!*-program samt Yo-Yo Ma og The Silk Road Ensemble. Han afslutter 'The Nielsen Project' – et flerårigt projekt med koncertopførelser og cd-indspilninger af Carl Nielsens symfonier og solokoncerter – og står i 2015 i spidsen for en forårsturné til Europa. Blandt højdepunkterne fra Gilberts tid med Filharmonikerne kan nævnes de berømmede opsætninger af Ligetis *Le Grand Macabre*, Janáček's *Den fiffige lille ræv*, Stephen Sondheims *Sweeney Todd* med Bryn Terfel og Emma Thompson, *Philharmonic 360* i Park Avenue Armory, Bachs h-mol messe, Ives' 4. Symfoni, en opførelse af musikken til *2001: A Space Odyssey* sammen med filmen, Mahlers 2. Symfoni 'Opstandelsen' på tiårsdagen for 9/11 og ni rejser til udlandet.

Alan Gilbert er æresdirigent for Stockholm Filharmonikerne og 1. gæstedirigent for NDR Symfoniorkestret i Hamborg. Han dirigerer regelmæssigt verdens førende orkestre og har medvirket på flere Grammy-vindende udgivelser. Alan Gilbert leder af dirigent- og orkesterstudierne på New Yorks berømte Juilliard School, hvor han er tildelt the William Schuman Chair in Musical Studies. Han er udnævnt til æresdoktor ved The Curtis Institute of Music, har modtaget Columbia Universitets dirigentpris og er medlem i The American Academy of Arts & Sciences. alangilbert.com

Nikolaj Znaider er en af tidens førende violinister og kombinerer en solokarriere på højeste niveau med en spirende dirigentkarriere. Znaider har fastslået sine kvalifikationer som dirigent gennem de seneste mange sæsoner og bliver mere og mere efterspurgt af verdens førende orkestre. Znaider

er 1. gæstedirigent for Mariinskij Orkestret i Skt. Petersborg og er ofte gæstedirigent hos orkestre verden over. Som solist fortsætter Znaider med at optræde regelmæssigt sammen med verdens førende orkestre. Den kommende sæsons højdepunkter tæller optrædener med Wiener Filharmonikerne, Bayerischer Rundfunks symfoniorkester og Cleveland Orchestra med Franz Welser-Möst; et gensyn med Los Angeles Philharmonic med Andrey Boreyko og Staatskapelle Dresden med Christian Thielemann. Blandt de seneste års indspilninger kan nævnes Elgars violinkoncert med nu afdøde Sir Colin Davis og Staatskapelle Dresden og de prisvindende indspilninger af Brahms' og Korngolds violinkoncerter med Wiener Filharmonikerne og Valery Gergiev. Han har også indspillet alle Brahms' værker for violin og klaver sammen med Yefim Bronfman.

New York Philharmonics sololøjtetist **Robert Langevin** havde sin debut i 2001 med Filharmonikerne i den amerikanske førsteopførelse af Siegfried Matthus' Koncert for fløjte og harpe. Han har tidligere været solofløjtetist i Pittsburgh Symphony, assisterende solofløjtetist i Montreal Symphony, medlem af Musica Camerata Montreal og l'Ensemble de la Société de Musique Contemporaine du Québec og underviste ved Duquesne University. Som solist har han optrådt med Quebecs mest anerkendte ensembler, og han har indspillet recitals og kammermusik-programmer for den canadiske radio. Den Quebec-fødte Langevin studerede ved Montreal Conservatory og bestod med to førstepriser. Hans udmærkelser inkluderer Prix d'Europe og andenprisen ved Budapest International Competition i 1980. Langevin har givet recitals og master classes overalt i Nord- og Sydamerika, Europa og Asien, bl.a. i Nordkorea og Vietnam. Han er tilknyttet The Juilliard School, Manhattan School of Music og Orford International Summer Festival.

Anthony McGill, der tiltrådte som soloklarinetist i New York Filharmonikerne efter at have været soloklarinetist i The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, har optrådt med Metropolitanoperaens orkester, New York String Orchestra og American, Baltimore og San Diego symfoniorkestrene samt Orchestra 2001. Som kammermusiker har han arbejdet med Guarneri, Tokyo og Brentano kvartetterne og har optrådt med Ax, Bronfman, Uchida, Lang Lang, Shaham og Midori og med Musicians from Marlboro og Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center samt ved Tanglewood, Marlboro, Music@Menlo og Santa Fe kammermusikfestivalerne. Han spillede med Perlman, Ma og Montero ved indsættelsen af præsident Barack Obama i 2009 og har optrådt på *Performance Today*, MPR's *Saint Paul Sunday*, *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, *NBC Nightly News*, *Steve Harvey Show* og *MSNBC*.

McGill er tilknyttet The Juilliard School, Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University, Bard College Conservatory of Music og Manhattan School of Music.

Erin Morley er en af vore dages mest efterspurgte lyriske koloratursopraner og modtog flot anerkendelse for sit gennembrud som Marguerite de Valois i *Huguenotterne* ved Bard Summer-Scape. Hun har arbejdet med Filharmonierne på en række projekter som bl.a. Mahlers 4. Symfoni, Lerner & Loewes *Camelot* (som Nimue), Orffs *Carmina burana* og Honeggers *Jeanne d'Arc på bålet* samt Carl Nielsens Symfoni nr. 3. Morley har sunget hovedroller på bl.a. The Metropolitan Opera, Nationaloperaen i Paris, Wiener Staatsoper og Bayerische Staatsoper.

Den canadiske baryton **Joshua Hopkins**, som *Opera News* udnævnte som en ud af 25 kunstnere klare til at bryde stærkt igennem i løbet af de næste årti, har arbejdet med Marin Alsop, Andrew Davis, Hans Graf, Bernard Labadie, Paul McCreesh, Andris Nelsons, Yannick Nézet-Séguin og Robert Spano. Han har optrådt sammen med Gulbenkian Foundation, Les Violons du Roy, Orchestra of St. Luke's samt symfoniorkestrene i Cleveland, Philadelphia, Toronto og Verbier Festivalen. Hopkins har givet recitals rundt om i Nordamerika, bl.a. i Carnegie Hall, og hans første recital udgivelse, *Let Beauty Awake*, er udgivet på pladeselskabet ATMA Classique.

New York Philharmonic fortsætter med at spille en førende rolle kulturelt i New York City såvel som i resten af verden. Projekterne i 2014/15 sæsonen kommer til at forbinde orkestret med op til 50 millioner musikelskere via livekoncerter i New York og på dets ture rundt i verden; ligeledes via digitale downloads foruden internationale optrædener på TV, i radio og online. Ikke mindst vil Filharmonikerne vedblive med at være en ressource gennem deres vidtrækkende undervisningsprogrammer. Siden sin grundlæggelse i 1842 har orkestret bestilt og uropført værker af førende komponister gennem tiderne – deriblandt Dvoraks symfoni *Fra den ny verden*, Coplands *Connnotations* og John Adams' Pulitzer Prize-belønnede *On the Transmigration of Souls*, tilegnet ofrene fra d. 11. september 2001.

Som et af verdens mest velrenommerede orkestre har Filharmonikerne optrådt i 432 byer i 63 lande, bl.a. på de banebrydende turneer til Europa i 1930 og Sovjet i 1959 samt under det historiske besøg i Nordkoreas hovedstad Pyongyang i 2008 og orkestrets første optræden i Hanoi, Vietnam, i 2009. New York Philharmonic tilbyder sig som en ressource både lokalt som i resten af verden. År-

ligt giver orkestret gratis koncerter overalt i byen med et bredt udvalg af undervisningsprogrammer, bl.a. Young People's Concerts og Philharmonic Schools – et dybtgående skoleklasseprogram, som når tusinder af elever i New York City. Filharmonikerne arbejder også for udviklingen af morgendagens førende orkestermusikere. Det gør de gennem samarbejder med både hjemlige og internationale kulturinstitutioner om at lave projekter, der kombinerer optræden med intensiv undervisning fra Filharmonikernes musikere; samarbejdspartnere er her Shanghai Symphony Orchestra og Shanghai Conservatory of Music samt Santa Barbara's Music Academy of the West.

New York Philharmonic er et af verdens ældste symfoniorkestre og har siden 1917 indspillet godt 2000 plader med adskillige Grammy Awards til følge. Orkestrets egenproducerede download-serie fortsætter i 2014-15 sæsonen. Alan Gilbert tiltrådte som dirigent og kunstnerisk leder i september 2009, hvor han efterfulgte nogle af det 20. århundredes mest enestående musikpersonligheder som bl.a. Leonard Bernstein, Arturo Toscanini og Gustav Mahler.
nyphil.org



Alan Gilbert and New York Philharmonic

New York Philharmonic



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Symphony No. 2 on 27–29 January and 1 February 2011

Symphony No. 3 on 14–16 June 2012

Symphonies Nos. 1 & 4 on 12–15 March 2014

Symphonies Nos. 5 & 6 on 1–3 October 2014

Violin & Flute Concertos on 10–13 October 2012

Clarinet Concerto 7–10 & 13 January 2015

Recording producers: Preben Iwan and Mats Engström

Sound engineers: Preben Iwan (Symphonies Nos. 1, 4, 5 & 6; Concertos),

Mikkel Nymand (Symphonies Nos. 2 & 3)

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Recorded in the DXD audio format (Digital eXtreme Definition) 352.8kHz / 32bit

(except Symphony No. 2 recorded in 96 kHz / 24bit)

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– surround microphones: 2x DPA 4015TL

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