

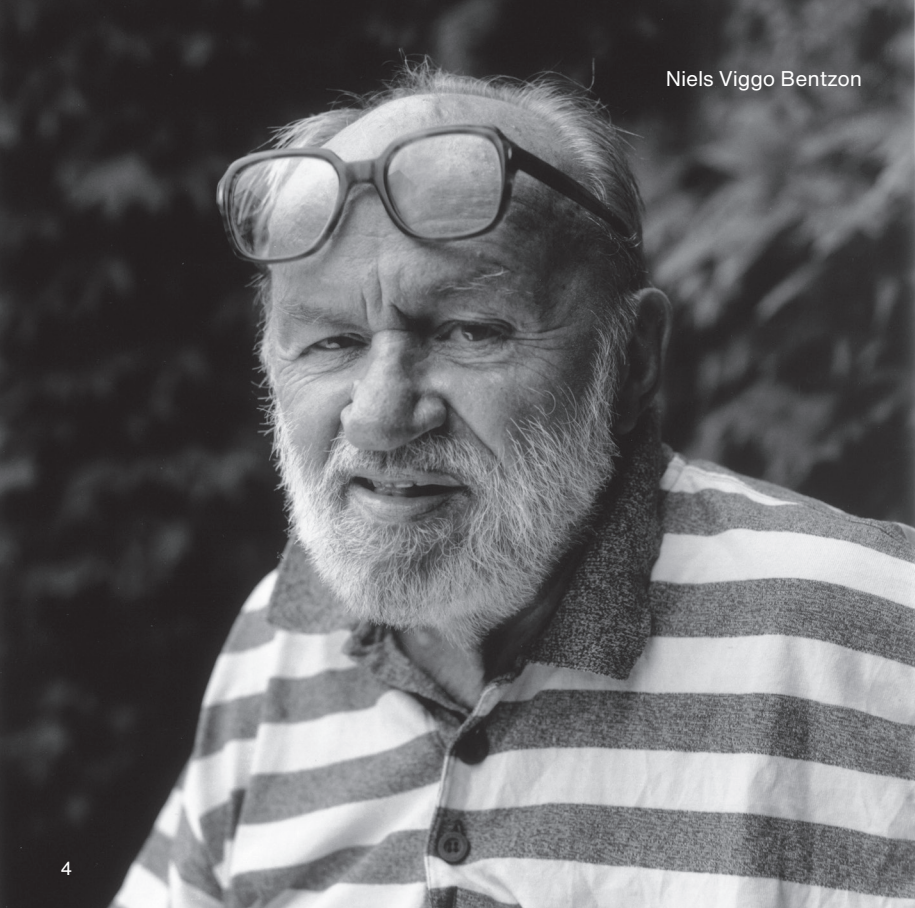


Niels Viggo Bentzon (1919–2000)

Piano Works

Ramez Mhaanna, piano

Partita, Op. 38 (1945)	20:00
1 I Præambulum. Largo	2:21
2 II Allegro	3:59
3 III Intermezzo I. Andante	4:07
4 IV Intermezzo II. Allegro molto	2:29
5 V Fanfare – Allegro – Fanfare. Moderato e grandioso	7:04
Træsnit, Op. 65 (Woodcuts) (1950)	21:10
6 Largo	1:37
7 Moderato	1:31
8 Molto largo	2:57
9 Tempo giusto	2:36
10 Con moto	1:38
11 Tempo pesante	2:21
12 Flessibile, secco	1:28
13 Presto molto ritmico	1:24
14 Quasi cadenza	1:15
15 Molto sostenuto	2:17
16 Largo	2:06
Toccata, Op. 10 (1941)	
17 Adagio non troppo	7:49
18 Passacaglia, Op. 31 (1945)	15:30



Niels Viggo Bentzon

Niels Viggo Bentzon – Virtuoso and Genius?

By Jens Brincker

‘There are two Danish composers who are geniuses: Rued Langgaard and Niels Viggo Bentzon. And they both have a condition.’

That was said to one of his students by Vagn Holmboe, one of the twentieth century’s most significant Danish composers and teachers of composition at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen. The remark must have been made between 1950, when Holmboe began teaching at the Academy, and 10 July 1952, when Langgaard died.

The four works for piano recorded here stem from the years between 1941 and 1950. The three earliest (*Toccata*, Op. 10, *Passacaglia*, Op.

31 and *Partita*, Op. 38) from between 1941 and 1945. It is virtuoso music, which Niels Viggo Bentzon played himself at full blast in order to showcase his talents at the prestigious events celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Academy in 1942 and the international ISCM festival in Copenhagen in 1947. No-one could be in any doubt that he was a virtuoso on the piano. But was he a composer of genius? Which was more decisive? The keys or the music paper?

He returned to this issue later in his life. When he was approaching his 70th year, he was interviewed for an article by Bertel Krarup (*Dansk Musik Tidsskrift*, 1988/89, p. 21) and said:

‘The only thing I can do [...] is to put my paws to the keyboard in the way I feel is right from the outset – that shows itself, too, in most cases, to be the right thing to do – and then my paws move a little. Trusting the hands to get it right. Certainly, the brain is engaged in the playing too,

but [...] if you want me to think over what it is I've done, I bloody well can't do it [...] actually, for me there is no difference between composition and improvisation.'

The three early works recorded here (*Toccata*, *Passacaglia* and *Partita*) deal with the issue, each in their own way. We can hear a Baroque affinity acknowledged in the Bachian titles of the works. We can also note the development in these works, which overtakes pianistic virtuosity and points instead toward compositional genius.

A trilogy for piano

In 1976–1977, Niels Viggo Bentzon compiled a brief overview of the three works himself:

'Cheered by [...] my first public success [*Toccata*] I soon had the urge to get on with new works for piano. These were the *Passacaglia* and *Partita*. Together with the *Toccata*, the works form a trilogy in which the

late Baroque style forms the technical basis of the musical composition.'

The *Toccata* is an introduction. It was often used in this way by Bach, when it was followed by a fugue. It was a virtuoso introduction to a brilliant composition. During his lifetime, the genius Bach became overshadowed by Bach the organ virtuoso and improviser. Niels Viggo Bentzon's *Toccata* is first and foremost a virtuoso improvisation, where Bach's subsequent fugue is replaced by scattered fugal details along the way. Besides, Bach is not Bentzon's only inspiration: Paul Hindemith's 'neo-baroque', with its expanded tonality, which breaks the limitations of the tonal system and opens itself up to dissonance, runs through the *Toccata*. Bentzon's *Toccata* from the beginning of the 1940s is more 'neo' than 'baroque', 'Entartet' in German, 'degenerated' in English. Hindemith emigrated from Germany to the USA because Hitler did not like his

music. He had been offended when a star in one of Hindemith's operas sang an aria while lying in a bathtub, and was disgusted when Hindemith played string quartets with a Jewish musician.

The hands were not the only distinction of Bentzon's *Toccata*. The heart is there too.

We can see the brain at work more clearly in the next piece in the trilogy. The *Passacaglia* takes its starting point from one of Bach's passacaglias for organ. In this form, the main theme is played repeatedly in the bass while the treble accompanies the bass with new and contrapuntal voices: the piece takes the form of a series of variations over the repeated bass.

Bentzon's *Passacaglia* begins in this way too: first we hear the bass theme alone, and then four variations in which the bass is repeated in varied contexts. But then something

unexpected happens: the bass theme is played upside down, with the falling intervals played going upwards and vice versa, while the theme is moved around the keyboard. The original theme returns, sometimes with the inverted variant, and at other times as a part of a symphonic development that culminates in a climax and a coda. The goal is not only a series of variations but also a compositional whole, 'a work'.

With *Partita*, Op. 38 Bentzon takes his leave from the Baroque as his dominant inspiration. The title and the three outer movements (the first, second and fifth movements) point back toward the Baroque tradition, but Bentzon adds another two movements, entitled *Intermezzo I* and *II*, that are not rooted in the Baroque partita. Instead, they correspond to a development which is characteristic of the music of the twentieth century, with *Intermezzo I* at the centre of an arch form, with the first and fifth, and

the second and fourth movements, standing in relation to each other in a symmetrical whole.

Partita is not only a farewell to the Baroque, but also an open door to something contemporary and new. Herein lies a contrast, maybe also a conflict, which the notes, rather than the form, are witness to, something which is interpreted by the end of WW2. The *Partita* was completed in 1945, the year when war turned to peace, and worry turned to hope. Happiness emerged from depressive blackness.

The conflict between darkness and light is the main subject in *Partita*, in which the bass register dominates the first two movements with hefty, dark sounds and insistent tone repetitions which suppress and hinder the treble's attempt to strike a light. In the third movement, *Intermezzo I*, the picture changes: the music moves from the deep register of the bass to the descant, the tempo settles down and the insistent note

repetitions become lyrical melodies. The fourth movement returns to the allegro tempo of the second movement, but moves its centre of gravity from the bass to the treble. The finale contrasts the dark themes of the first movement with the luminous melodies of the third movement.

This is just my interpretation, built upon Bentzon's own performance of *Partita* in the years around 1950, but it does not pretend to be *the* explanation. The conflict between depression and happiness, darkness and light, is not tied to the world around us: it can find its own place in the human mind. More about this later.

The composer, Niels Viggo Bentzon

For the composer, 1945 marked the point at which the Baroque genres which he had found in Bach were overshadowed by forms from the Classical era, especially the sonata and the symphony. He turned from the *style* of the neo-baroque genres towards the *form* of the Classic and

Romantic period which create works which are more than the sum of their individual parts.

For the pianist Niels Viggo Bentzon, this meant that he was playing for a new and broader audience. The starting point for this was *Partita*, which was one of three Danish works selected for performance at the international ISCM festival in 1947, which was centred in Copenhagen and the Swedish town Lund. This drew an international public who were excited by Bentzon's work and his virtuoso performance of it. The doors of the concert halls of Europe and the USA were opened to him, giving new Danish music recognition abroad. In the words of the Swedish composer and reviewer, Sven-Erik Bäck:

'*Partita* [...] arouses, to begin with, one's great admiration because of its brilliant compositional technique. But gradually you are gripped irresistibly by its spontaneity and the imaginative sublimity of its form. [...] Bentzon

is one of the really great names in Scandinavian music just now.'

On a professional level, this meant more engagements, commissions and prizes, both at home and abroad. He signed an exclusive contract with the publisher Wilhelm Hansen in 1949 and in 1950 was taken on by the Academy in Copenhagen as a teacher of, amongst other things, form. In 1954 he published the first Danish textbook on Schönberg's twelve tone music. In 1957 he and his wife Gudrun went on a six-month trip to the USA, during which Bentzon gave lectures and demonstrations at a number of American universities.

Niels Viggo Bentzon became a well-known and appreciated composer who worked in the Copenhagen cultural milieu, with the restaurant Tokanten as a regular meeting place for artists, then gradually also for architects and musicians.

On a personal level, this period of his life was happy, and he was able

to travel with Gudrun. Paris was a preferred destination as it was a good place to meet Danish abstract painters like Richard Winther and Gunnar Aagaard Andersen, whose interest in experiments with music Bentzon got acquainted with in Copenhagen.

But his personal life was not without challenges. Niels Viggo Bentzon was part of a family, on his father's side, in which mental health problems were not unknown. His cousin Jørgen Bentzon, who was known for his chamber music and co-founded the public Copenhagen School of Music with the composer Finn Høffding, was a dozen years older than Niels Viggo Bentzon; he ended his life in Nykøbing Sjælland as a patient at the State Institute for Mental Illnesses.

After returning home from the USA in 1957, Niels Viggo Bentzon separated from Gudrun and was given a diagnosis of bipolar disorder. This illness marked his personality throughout his life, including through

a number of hospital admissions: he sought to fight it through medication.

***Træsnit* (Woodcuts) – between poetry and noise-painting**

The fourth work on this recording, *Træsnit*, was inspired by a Dada-ist group of artists called Linien II, and was first performed in 1950, in Den frie Udstillingsbygning (The Free Exhibition Building), with the composer at the piano as a member of Linien II.

Træsnit is a key work that binds time past with the future in a surprising way. The past shows itself immediately through the title of the work, referring to the poem *Træsnit* by Christian Winther, who had made his debut as an author in 1828. It deals with a loving relationship between peasant boys and girls, one which culminates in marriage rather than in sexual activity, so adopting the manners and attitudes of fine society. Winther introduces and describes, then, ordinary people's feelings and

fidelity in eleven poems that describe the pair's problems with strangers who try to tempt the girl away; but the girls hold fast to their sweet-hearts, and the last poem closes with the warning, 'So will you speak to Father and Mother tomorrow?'

Niels Viggo Bentzon's *Træsnit* contains, like Winther's poem, eleven small and independent movements, with love as a thoroughgoing motive which is introduced in the first section and then repeated, often broken into single intervals, in the ten sections which follow. There is no Bach-like passacaglia here, or variations in the style of Brahms, but from shifting points of view there is, gathered at the end, a kind of reprise of the first section's introductory motive.

In relation to the thematic working that characterizes Bentzon's sonatas and symphonies from the second half of the 1940s, this kind of cohesion is a compositional simplification unparalleled in Bentzon's earlier works.

The composer doesn't go to music's 'Father and Mother' to find inspiration: as mentioned earlier, he met artists from other disciplines at restaurants like Tokanten, where modern painters discussed 'concrete, abstract' art, and sometimes he heard music written or improvised by artists who were aiming to express the ideas behind the art in a musical form, as 'noise-paintings'. The most extreme of the artists gradually came together in the group Linien II, which combined the visual experience of pictures with auditory elements in the years between 1947 and 1952, through exhibitions which included works by international guests. These exhibitions included the 'noise-paintings' of Richard Winther and Gunnar Aagaard Andersen or musical pieces by Niels Viggo Bentzon, performed by the composer himself.

These visual artists were not trying to compose music. They were aiming to release themselves from the fields and frames of the canvas

in a kind of concrete and abstract expression in which lines and circles could stand free, as though they were floating sounds. Their products were not music but, according to Richard Winther's phrase, were 'noise-paintings' in which the sounds coalesced into musical expression in the listener's own head.

Now, almost 75 years later, it is possible to hear these 'noise-paintings' unfold (on the album *Linien II*, published by the Institute for Danish Sound Archaeology), and note the simplification and steady insistence on contrasting sounds and motives that can be found in *Træsnit*. Not as banal quotes, but as new inspiration for one of Bentzon's main works, and as a background to the graphic scores which Bentzon composed later.

Holmboe was probably right.

Ramez Mhaanna is an internationally renowned Danish pianist with a Russian and Lebanese background. He graduated from the Gnesin Russian Academy of Music in Moscow and from the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen. From an early age, Ramez Mhaanna has won prizes in Danish and international piano competitions, including first prizes in Berlingske Tidenes Classical Music Competition in 2006, Musica Classica in Moscow in 2010 and Musical Seasons in Prague in 2011. In recent years he has been awarded a silver medal at the 1st Vienna Music Competition in 2019 and won the prize for best performance of Danish repertoire at the Copenhagen Lied Duo Competition the same year. He is also the recipient of a number of honorary awards, including the Léonie Sonning's Talent Prize 2019, the Carl Nielsen & Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen Talent Award 2020 and the Rødovre Music Prize 2022.

In Denmark, he has given recitals as a soloist and chamber musician at festivals such as Copenhagen Summer Festival, Kultur mødet Mors and Bornholm Music Festival and at venues like Tivoli Concert Hall, Den Sorte Diamant, DR Koncerthuset and Musikhuset Aarhus. He has performed as a soloist with orchestras such as Aarhus Symphony Orchestra, Nordic Chamber Orchestra and Qingdao Orchestra.

In the years 2017 to 2019, Ramez Mhaanna toured China regularly, performing in more than 30 concert venues. In Russia, he has performed at prestigious festivals such as V storonu Vyborga and Levithan Festival.



Ramez Mhaanna

Niels Viggo Bentzon – virtuos og geni?

Af Jens Brincker

“Der er to danske komponister, som er genier: Rued Langgaard og Niels Viggo Bentzon. Og de fejler begge to noget.”

Det sagde en af det 20. århundredes betydeligste danske komponister – og lærer i komposition på konservatoriet – Vagn Holmboe til en af sine elever. Bemærkningen må være faldet mellem 1950, hvor Holmboe blev ansat på konservatoriet, og 1952, hvor Rued Langgaard døde den 10. juli.

De fire klaverværker på dette album stammer alle fra årene 1941-1950. De tre tidligste af dem – *Toccatà*, op. 10, *Passacaglia*, op. 31 og *Partita*, op. 38 – fra årene 1941-1945. Det er virtuos musik, som Niels

Viggo Bentzon selv spillede for fuld udblæsning ved prestigefyldte anledninger som konservatoriets 75-års-jubilæumskoncerter i 1942 eller ved den internationale ISCM-festival i København i 1947. Ingen kunne være i tvivl om, at han var en virtuos ved klaveret. Men var han også en genial komponist? Hvad var afgørende: tangentterne eller nodepapiret?

Det spørgsmål vendte han tilbage til senere i sit liv. Da han nærmede sig de 70 år, besvarede han det i et interview over for Bertel Krarup (Dansk Musik Tidsskrift, årgang 1988/89, s. 21):

“Det eneste, jeg kan [...] det er, at poterne bliver sat på klaveret på en måde, som jeg har fornemmelsen af må være rigtig i første omgang – det viser sig også i de fleste tilfælde at være rigtigt – så bevæger poterne sig en lille smule. Det er altså hænderne, der laver det. Selvfølgelig er hjernen med i spillet, men [...] hvis du vil have mig til at tænke over dét, jeg har

gjort, så kan jeg sgu ikke lave det. [...] Der er jo i realiteten overhovedet ikke nogen forskel på komposition og improvisation hos mig.”

De tre tidlige værker på denne udgivelse – *Toccata*, *Passacaglia* og *Partita* – besvarer spørgsmålet på hver deres måde. Man hører barokke træk, der allerede kvitteres for med de bachske titler. Men man bemærker også den udvikling, der sker i løbet af de tre værker. En udvikling, der overhaler pianistisk virtuositet og peger frem mod kompositorisk genialitet.

En trilogi for klaver

I 1976-1977 udarbejdede Niels Viggo Bentzon selv en kort oversigt over de tre værker:

“Opmuntret af [...] min første ydre succes [*Toccata*] fik jeg snart lyst til at gå i gang med nye værker for klaver. Det blev til *Passacaglia* og *Partita*. Sammen med *Toccataen* udgør de en værktrilogi, hvor den senbarokke stil har været det

tekniske grundlag for den musikalske udarbejdelse.”

Toccataen er en indledning. Som sådan fungerer den ofte hos Bach, når den efterfølges af en fuga: en virtuos indledning til en genial komposition. Geniet Bach blev i sin levetid overskygget af orgelvirtuosen og improvisatoren Bach. Niels Viggo Bentzons *Toccata* er først og fremmest en virtuos improvisation, hvor Bachs efterfølgende fuga erstattes af spredte, fugerede detaljer undervejs. Og så er Bach ikke Bentzons eneste inspiration. Også Paul Hindemiths ‘neobarok’ med dens udvidede tonalitet, der sprænger toneartens begrænsninger og åbner for dissonanser, gennemsyrrer *Toccataen*. Bentzons *Toccata* fra begyndelsen af 1940’erne er mere ‘neo’ end ‘barok’. *Entartet* (degenereret), som det hed på tysk, mens Hindemith emigrerede fra Tyskland til USA, fordi Hitler ikke brød sig om hans musik og var forarget over, at en stjerne i en af Hindemiths operaer sang en arie

liggende i et badekar. For ikke at tale om Hitlers afsky, når Hindemith spillede strygekvartet sammen med en jødisk musiker.

Hænderne alene har ikke æren af Bentzons *Toccata*. Hjertet er også med.

Hjernen lægger man mere mærke til i de to næste dele af trilogien. Først i *Passacagliaen*, hvor udgangspunktet er en af Bachs orgel-passacagliaer. Det vil sige et værk, hvor hovedtemaet spilles i bassen og gentages, mens diskanten ledsager bassen med nye og kontrapunktiske stemmer, så musikken fremstår som en serie af variationer.

Sådan begynder Bentzons *Passacaglia* også: Først hører man bastemaet alene, så fire variationer hvor bassen gentages i forskellige omgivelser; men så sker der noget uventet: Bassens tema spilles vendt om – så nedadgående intervaller spilles opadgående og opadgående intervaller nedadgående – og flytter rundt på klaviaturet.

Så vender det oprindelige tema tilbage, nogle gange i samklang med den ‘omvendte’ variant, andre gange som led i en symfonisk udvikling, der kulminerer i et højdepunkt og en coda. Målet er ikke kun en række variationer, men også en kompositorisk helhed – et værk.

Med *Partita*, op. 38 tager Bentzon afsked med barokken som dominerende inspiration. Titlen og de tre yderste satser (1., 2. og 5. sats) peger tilbage mod den barokke tradition. Men til dem føjer Bentzon to andre satser (3. og 4.) med titlerne *Intermezzo I* og *II*, der ikke har rødder i den barokke partita, men forvandler den til en udvikling, hvor *Intermezzo I* står i centrum, mens henholdsvis 1. og 5. sats samt 2. og 4. sats perspektiverer hinanden og indgår i en symmetrisk helhed – en bueform, der er karakteristisk for det 20. århundredes musik.

Partita er ikke alene en afsked med barokken, men også en åben dør mod noget nutidigt og nyt. Heri ligger

en kontrast, måske også en konflikt, som ikke formen, men tonerne, vidner om. Og som befrielsen fortolker. *Partita*, op. 38 blev færdigkomponeret i 1945, det år hvor krig blev til fred, bekymring til håb og det depressive sortsyn blev til lyst fremsyn.

Konflikten mellem mørke og lys er hovedsagen i *Partita*, hvor basregistret dominerer de to første sater med heftige, mørke klange, og insisterende tonegentagelser overdøver og forhindrer diskantens forsøg på at tænde lys. I 3. sats, *Intermezzo I*, skifter billedet: Musikken flytter fra det dybe register i bassen til diskanten, tempoet sættes ned, og de insisterende tonegentagelser bliver til lyriske melodier. 4. sats vender tilbage til 2. sats' allegro-tempo, men flytter 2. sats' tyngdepunkt fra bassen op til diskanten. Finalen kontrasterer 1. sats' mørke temaer med 3. sats' lysende melodik.

Dette er bare min fortolkning, der bygger på Bentzons egen indspilning af *Partita* fra årene omkring 1950.

Den giver sig ikke ud for at være 'forklaringen'. Konflikten mellem sortsyn og lykke, mørke og lys er ikke bundet til omverdenen. Den kan også finde sted i menneskets sind. Herom senere.

Komponisten Niels Viggo Bentzon

For komponisten Niels Viggo Bentzon betød 1945, at de barokke genrer med udgangspunkt i Bach blev overskygget af klassiske former – især sonate og symfoni. Et vendepunkt fra den neobarokke genres *stil* mod den klassisk-romantiske *form*, der skaber værker, som er mere end summen af enkelthederne.

For pianisten Niels Viggo Bentzon betød det et nyt og udvidet publikum. Her var udgangspunktet *Partita* – et af tre udvalgte danske værker ved den internationale ISCM-festival, der i 1947 havde centrum i København og et internationalt publikum, der begejstredes over Bentzons værk og hans virtuose opførelse af det. Det åbnede døre til koncertsale både i

Europa og i USA og gav ny dansk musik anerkendelse i udlandet. Med den svenske komponist og anmelder Sven-Erik Bäck's ord:

“*Partita* [...] vækker til at begynde med ens store beundring på grund af den brillante kompositionsteknik. Men efterhånden gribes man uimodståeligt af spontaniteten og det fantasimæssigt storslåede i udformningen. [...] Bentzon er et af de virkelig store navne i skandinavisk musik netop nu.”

På det professionelle plan betød det flere engagementer og bestillinger og legater både hjemme og i udlandet, en generalkontrakt med forlaget Wilhelm Hansen i 1949, i 1950 ansættelse på Musikkonservatoriet i København som lærer i blandt andet formlære, i 1954 en udgivelse af den første danske lærebog i Schönbergs tolvtonemusik og i 1957 et lille halvt års turné (med hustruen, Gudrun) til USA, hvor Bentzon holdt forelæsnin-

ger med demonstrationer på universiteter både øst- og vestpå.

Niels Viggo Bentzon blev en kendt og værdsat komponist, der færdedes i det københavnske kulturmiljø med restaurant Tokanten som mødested for billedkunstnere og efterhånden også arkitekter og musikere.

Privat tegnede tiden sig lys med tid og råd til rejser med Gudrun. Paris var et foretrukket mål og muligt mødested med danske abstrakte billedkunstnere som Richard Winther eller Gunnar Aagaard Andersen, hvis interesse for og eksperimenter med musik Niels Viggo Bentzon stiftede bekendtskab med hjemme i København.

Men personligt var det ikke uden omkostninger. Niels Viggo Bentzon var på fædrene side af en familie, der ikke var ukendt med psykiske lidelser. Hans en snes år ældre fætter, komponisten Jørgen Bentzon, der var kendt for sin kammermusik og medstifter af Københavns Folkemusikskole sammen med komponisten Finn Høffding, endte sin karriere i Nykøbing Sjælland

som patient på Statsanstalten for Sindslidende.

Hjemkommen fra USA i 1957 blev Niels Viggo Bentzon skilt fra Gudrun og fik stillet diagnosen bipolar lidelse ("mani-depressiv"). En sygdom, som prægede hans personlighed livet igennem med indlæggelser adskillige gange, og som han måtte forsøge at bekæmpe gennem medicinering.

Træsnit – mellem lyrik og støjmaleri

Det fjerde værk på denne indspilning, klaverstykkerne *Træsnit*, var inspireret af den dadaistiske kunstnergruppe Linien II og blev uropført 1950 i Den Frie Udstillingsbygning med Niels Viggo Bentzon ved klaveret i hans egenskab af medlem af Linien II.

Træsnit er et nøgleværk, der forbinder fortid og nutid på en overraskende måde. Fortiden ytrer sig umiddelbart gennem værket's titel: Titlen refererer til digtene *Træsnit* af Christian Winther, der indgik i hans

forfatterdebut i 1828. De handler om kærlighed mellem bønderkarle og -piger. Kærlighed, der kulminerer i ægteskab snarere end i seksuelle aktiviteter, som var udbredt i adelige og lignende fine omgangskredse. Winther introducerer og beskriver derefter jævne menneskers følelser og troskab gennem 11 digte, der skildrer parrenes problemer med fremmede, som prøver at erobre pigerne. Men pigerne holder fast ved deres kærester, og det sidste digt slutter med formaningen: "Saa taler du i Morgen med Fader og med Moer?"

Niels Viggo Bentzons *Træsnit* rummer lige som Winthers digt 11 små og indbyrdes uafhængige satser med kærlighed som et gennemgående motiv, der introduceres i 1. sats og gentages – ofte forkortet til enkelte intervaller – i de følgende 10 satser. Her er ikke tale om passacaglia som hos Bach eller variationer a la Brahms, men om skiftende synsvinkler, der til sidst samles i en slags reprise af 1. sats' indledende motiv.

I forhold til den tematiske udvikling, der præger Bentzons sonater og symfonier fra sidste halvdel af 1940'erne, er denne form for sammenhæng en kompositorisk forenkling uden sidestykke i Bentzons tidligere værker.

Niels Viggo Bentzon gik ikke til musikkens "Fader og Moer" for at hente inspiration. Som tidligere nævnt mødte han kunstnere fra andre fag på restauranter som Tokanten, hvor moderne malere diskuterede "konkret, abstrakt" billedkunst, og nogle gange hørte han også toner skrevet eller improviseret af billedkunstnere, der forsøgte at udtrykke idéerne bag deres malerier musikalsk som "støjmalier". De yderliggående af billedkunstnerne koncentreredes efterhånden i gruppen Linien II, som i årene 1947-1952 gennem udstillinger (blandt andet med internationale gæster) kombinerede den visuelle oplevelse af billeder med auditive elementer – for eksempel deres egne "støjmalier" af malerne Richard

Winther og Gunnar Aagaard Andersen eller musikstykker af Niels Viggo Bentzon, som han selv opførte.

Billedkunstnerne prøvede ikke at komponere musik. De forsøgte at frigøre deres på én gang konkrete og abstrakte udtryk fra lærredets felter og rammer, så linjer og cirkler genopstår som fritsvævende lyde. Ikke som musik, men, med Richard Winthers ord, som "støjmaleri", hvor lydene først i tilhørernes hoveder samles til musikalske udtryk.

Nu små 75 år senere er det muligt at høre disse "støjmalier" udfolde sig (albummet *Linien II*, udgivet af Institut for Dansk Lydarkæologi) og bemærke den forenkling og stædige insisteren på kontrasterende lyde eller motiver, som genfindes i Niels Viggo Bentzons *Træsnit*. Ikke som banale citater, men som ny inspiration til et af Bentzons hovedværker og som baggrund for de grafiske partiturer, Niels Viggo Bentzon senere komponerede.

Holmboe havde nok ret.

Ramez Mhaanna er en internationalt anerkendt dansk pianist med russisk og libanesiske baggrund. Han er uddannet fra Musikkonservatoriet Gnesin i Moskva og fra Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium i København. Ramez Mhaanna vandt fra en tidlig alder priser i danske og internationale klaverkonkurrencer, blandt andet førstepræmier i Berlingske Tidendes Klassiske Musikkonkurrence i 2006, Musica Classica i Moskva i 2010 og Musical Seasons i Prag i 2011. I de seneste år er han blandt andet blevet tildelt en sølvmedalje ved 1st Vienna Music Competition i 2019 og har vundet prisen for bedste fremførelse af dansk repertoire ved Copenhagen Lied Duo Competition i 2019. Mhaanna er desuden modtager af en række hæderspriser, blandt andre Léonie Sonnings Talentpris 2019, Carl Nielsen & Anne Marie Carl-Nielsens Talentpris 2020 samt Rødovre Musikpris 2022.

I Danmark har han haft recitals som solist og kammermusiker på

festivaler som Copenhagen Summer Festival, Kulturmødet Mors og Bornholms Musikfestival samt i spillesteder som Tivolis Koncertsal, Den Sorte Diamant, DR Koncerthuset og Musikhuset Aarhus. Han har optrådt som solist med orkestre som Aarhus Symfoniorkester, Nordisk Kammerorkester og Qingdao Orkesteret.

I årene 2017 til 2019 turnerede Ramez Mhaanna jævnligt i Kina, hvor han optrådte på flere end 30 koncertsteder. I Rusland har han optrådt på prestigefyldte festivaler som V storonu Vyborga og Levithan Festival.

DDD

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