

MARTIN STAUNING (born 1982)

VERDORRTE RÄUME

ENSEMBLE MODERN



Martin Stauning was originally educated as a dancer, and worked as such at The Royal Danish Ballet in Copenhagen. He took his Master of Music degree in Composition in 2014 from The Royal Danish Academy of Music, where he pursues an Advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Composition. Martin has counted among his teachers Hans Abrahamsen, Bent Sørensen and Niels Rosing-Schow.

Martin writes for any combination of instruments, with or without electronics, as well as working in sound performance and installation. Martin has written incidental music for plays and music for dance and theatre. He is also an active performer and has performed works by John Cage, Alvin Lucier, Jeppe Ernst and himself.

Martin is the recipient of the Axel Borup-Jørgensen Composer Prize 2015, and he was awarded a Léonie Sonning Schoarship in 2016. Until October 2014 he served as the chairman of UNM Denmark, the Danish branch of the pan-Nordic annual festival for young sound artists, Young Nordic Music.

The sounds in contemporary music has become almost traditional

Martin Stauning's piece *Verdorrte Räume* is a smart and elegant music, but can also be read as a critique towards the contemporary music scene:

- There are a number of composition techniques which have become almost standard in the repertoire of contemporary music, Martin explains:

- The first one is clicks from the instrument's mechanics, or slapping sounds from the musician touching his instrument. There is also air blown over the wind instruments, or from the almost unhearable touch of a bow on a string. Finally there are such short poppy sounds played typically on woodwind instruments. I am using these sounds as well, but in my piece they create a slightly claustrophobic prison, which I am trying to break away from.

In an organic way, throughout the piece, Martin is slowly moving the music in a direction of something more lyrical:

- Towards the end there is even a little Mahler hiding somewhere. I gave a hint in the score, by writing 'Wie ein Kondukt'. This is something Mahler used in the 1st movement of his 5th symphony.

Facts about the performance

Verdorrte Räume is played by Ensemble Modern under the guidance of conductor Benjamin Schneider. Ensemble Modern gave a concert on the festival KLANG in Copenhagen, June 2015. The festival is run, very professionally, by a team of young Danish composers: Rune Glerup, Christian Winther Christensen and Regin Petersen. The KLANG Festival 2016 will be taking place in June 10th-17th.

Review

"The highly concentrated material in Martin Stauning's Verdorrte Räume(2015) hits us with great power. Rarely does one experience an avantgarde piece in which the ingredients are so few and almost boiled down to a kind of concentrate."

(from the daily Danish newspaper Information)

Future projects for Martin Stauning

The Danish National Symphony Orchestra (Danish Radio Orchestra) has commissioned an orchestra piece to be premiered autumn 2017. Furthermore Martin is working on a musical drama together with the ensemble Scenatet.

Further reading:

<http://www.martinstauning.com>

<http://www.edition-s.dk>

<http://www.scenatet.dk>

Programme note: Martin Stauning & Max Fage-Pedersen