

This album is entitled *Eventyr* — a Norwegian word that conjures up fairy tales, stories of adventure and stories of fantasy. The tales and stories on this album are wild, beautiful, full of sorrow and of joy, and full of magic and love. Adventure stories inspire us and allow us to escape into the world of fantasy — and they bring us together.

«Jeg elsker eventyr. På denne platen er de ville, vakre, fantastiske, fulle av sorg og glede, magi og kjærlighet. Eventyr inspirerer oss, lar oss flykte inn i fantasien — og bringer oss sammen.» Christian Grøvlen, piano

- 1 **Geirr Tveitt** Eolsharpa
- 2-4 **Christian Sinding** Sonate
- 5-10 **Alf Hurum** Eventyrland
- 11 **Edvard Grieg** Ballade

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COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO



MQA-CD



SUPER AUDIO CD

2L¹⁶³

5.0 surround and stereo recorded in DXD 24bit/352.8kHz
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Eventyr

CHRISTIAN GRØVLEN piano



Jeg elsker eventyr. På denne platen er de ville, vakre, fantastiske, fulle av sorg og glede, magi og kjærlighet. Å arbeide med denne musikken har vært et eventyr! Det har føltes som en hjemkomst.

Eolsharpa av Geirr Tveitt (1908-1981) er et utrolig tonedikt. Musikken er forlokkende og spenner fra sårhet og ro til stormfull dramatik. Stykket finnes i en vakker håndskrevet note datert Bjødbrakane 22.06.45 og er inspirert av en vindharpe tegnet av Gerhard Munthe. I noten følger en hilsen til Tveitts venn og mesén Anton Fredrik Klaveness: «8 gongir hev soli snudd sidan eg fyrste gongen hørde korleis vinden leika i Eolsharpa di på Egeberg. Seinare hev eg titt tenkt på desse mjuke halvt uverkeleg fagre mjuke tonar, ikkje minst i livets stormar og myrke netter. Då såg eg for meg harpa som din kjære ven Gerhard Munthe teikna til deg: harpa med vengjir som flyg yver havets stormar, høgt uppe, og stjernor som skin i harpe-strengir.» Disse vakre ordene er nok til å sette fantasien i sving. Selv opplever jeg også noe sterkt «vestnorsk» i verket, bratte stup, dype fjorder og vilt uvær – og vakrest av alt er kanskje når lyset endelig får bryte gjennom skyene. At denne innspillingen er en verdenspremiere av verket slik det står notert i partituret fra 1945 (Tveitt spilte selv inn en egen versjon i 1949) er nesten ikke til å tro, og jeg er veldig glad for å kunne introdusere *Eolsharpa* for et større publikum. Ved siden av de musikalske kvalitetene forteller stykket også mye om Tveitts formidable egenskaper som pianist. Verket viser hans unike fantasi for klang og teksturer på klaveret, samt hans klare påvirkning fra den franske musikken, da særlig Ravel og hans *Gaspard de la Nuit*. Som elev av Nadia Boulanger i Paris er det også naturlig, en tilknytning han delte med flere norske komponister fra denne generasjonen. *Eolsharpa* er en pianistisk og musikalsk juvel i den norske klavermusikken.

Christian Sinding (1856-1941) var den store norske komponisten etter Grieg. For de fleste er han kjent som komponisten av ett enkelt stykke: *Frühlingsrauschen*. Dette lille klaverstykket var så mye spilt på kontinentet at den store pianisten Busoni hevdet av noen flygler spilte verket av seg selv! Sindings musikk er tyskinfluert, men alltid med en særnorsk vri. Hans **klaversonate** fra 1909 er heroisk, mektig og virtuos og verket flommer over av det «sindingske brus». Sonaten er tredelt, men alt bygger på tematisk materiale fra første sats, og finalen samler trådene i alle temaene. For meg er verket nesten i sagastil, med vikingskip og store seil, plyndring og heltedåder. Selv var Sinding en ganske sky og forsiktig person. I sin samtid var han først og fremst kjent som symfoniker, og særlig hans første symfoni gikk som en farsott over hele Europa. Som Grieg skrev han også mange klaverstykker og sanger, og særlig de siste må man også ønske seg at blir å finne igjen på konsertprogrammer fremover. Verdt å merke seg er også hans *Fatum Variasjoner* for klaver, som også er et fantastisk klaververk i den norske kanon.

Alf Hurum (1882-1972) var i likhet med Geirr Tveitt influert av den franske musikken. For musikkjennere vil etterklanger av Debussys musikk være enkel å spore i Hurums verker. Dette hører man fort i den sjarmerende suite *Eventyrland* fra 1920. Det er noe «kittelsenaktig» over disse småstykkene, på den ene side naturtro og mystiske, og samtidig med en barnlig naivitet og sjarmerie. Dette henger naturlig sammen med at Hurum også var maler og denne samlingen er uten tvil tonemalerier. Hurum gav da etter hvert opp musikken til fordel for billedkunsten, og hans verkliste er derfor ikke stor. På sine eldre dager reiste han dessuten til Hawaii hvor han reorganiserte Honolulu Symfoniorkester.

Edvard Griegs (1843-1907) *Ballade* op. 24, fullført våren 1876, er for meg det mest betydningsfulle stykke i norsk klavermusikk. Dette variasjonsverket er bygd over en sorgtung folkemelodi fra Valdres – *Den Nordlandske Bondestand* – og ble skrevet i sorg over tapet av begge Griegs foreldre og i en krevende periode i ekteskapet med Nina Grieg. Musikken synes å gå gjennom de ulike stadier av sorg, og jeg opplever å finne både fornektelse, sinne, forhandling, depresjon og aksept. Kanskje resignasjon er et bedre ord for hvordan dette verket ender. Rystende er det i hvert fall når musikken kjemper seg frem til den mektige trillen, et hjerteskjærende rop om hjelp – og den påfølgende rystende dype ess i bassen hvor alt håp er ute. Herfra er der ingen vei tilbake og musikken glir resignert tilbake til temaet og lar det vonde forbli vondt. Mer er det ikke mulig for meg å si om musikken og hva den betyr for meg – det ordløse forblir mer konkret enn enkle forklaringer. Jeg vil bare si at jeg elsker *Balladen* med hele meg.

Eventyr inspirerer oss, lar oss flykte inn i fantasien – og bringer oss sammen. Jeg håper at denne musikken kan gjøre nettopp dette.

Christian Grøven, Bergen 2021

Christian Grøven er en norsk pianist, komponist og musikkformidler. Han har vært solist med flere av Norges fremste orkestre, medvirket ved alle landets festivaler og spilt med en rekke artister. Hans første plate "Bach – Inside Polyphony" utkom sommeren 2017 på 2L til strålende kritikker og ble kåret til en av årets beste utgivelser av Morgenbladet. I tillegg til sitt omfattende virke som solist er Grøven også en yndet samspillpartner for sangere. Med prosjektet "Eventyr" vender Christian tilbake til sine musikalske røtter. Grøven er også direktør for KODE Komponisthjemmene Trolldhaugen, Lysoen og Siljustøl, samt Edvard Grieg Internasjonale Klaverkonkurranse.



We call this album *Eventyr* – a Norwegian word that conjures up fairy tales, stories of adventure and stories of fantasy. I love *eventyr*. The ones on this album are wild, beautiful, full of sorrow and of joy, and full of magic and love. Working with this music has itself been a story of adventure! And for me, it has felt like a homecoming.

Aeolian Harp by Geirr Tveitt (1908-1981) is an extraordinary tone poem. The music, ranging from tenderness and calm to storm-filled drama, draws the listener in. It is inspired by a drawing of an Aeolian harp by Gerhard Munthe. We have a beautiful hand-written score, dated “Bjødna brakana 22.06.45”, and on it there’s an acknowledgement, also hand-written, from Tveitt to his friend and patron Anton Fredrik Klaveness, which says: “Eight equinoxes have passed since I first heard how the wind played in your Aeolian harp at Egeberg. Since then I have often thought of those gentle and almost unnaturally beautiful melodies, not least amid the tempests and the dark nights of life. At these times I pictured in my mind the harp which your good friend Gerhard Munthe had drawn for you – a winged harp that flies over the ocean’s storms, high in the sky, with the stars glinting in its strings.” These are inspiring words! For me there is something in this music that evokes the west coast of Norway with its steep cliffs, deep fjords and wild weather – and, most beautiful of all perhaps, the light breaking through the clouds. It is barely credible that this recording of *Aeolian Harp*, in the version we have in the 1945 score, is a world premiere (Tveitt himself recorded a different, private version in 1949) and I am very happy to be able to introduce the work to a wider audience. In addition to its intrinsic quality as music, it says a lot about Tveitt’s formidable skill as a pianist, and it reveals the force of his unique imaginative gift for exploring the sound world and texture of the piano. It also shows clearly the influence of French music (particularly of Ravel and his *Gaspard de la Nuit*). This is only natural, since Tveitt had been a pupil of Nadia Boulanger in Paris, as indeed had several other Norwegian composers of this generation. All in all, *Aeolian Harp* is a musical and pianistic gem.

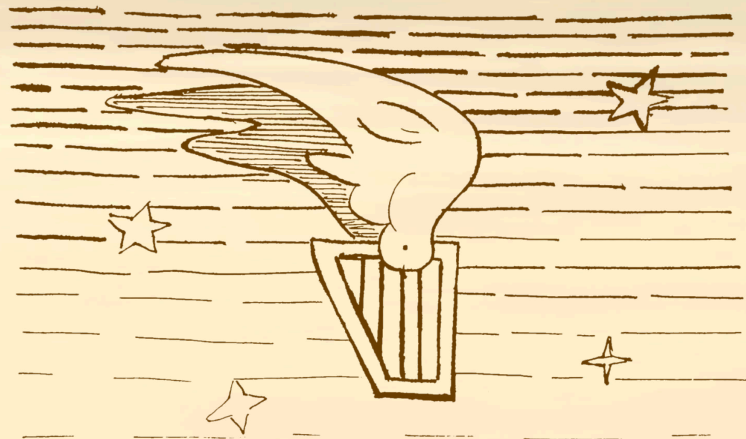
Christian Sinding (1856-1941) was the leading Norwegian composer in the post-Grieg era. For most people he is known as the composer of just one work: *Rustle of Spring*. This little piece for piano was played so often in Europe that the eminent pianist Busoni claimed that some pianos could play it on their own! Sinding’s music bears the imprint of German influence, but always has a strongly Norwegian sound. His *Piano Sonata* of 1909 is heroic, massive and virtuosic, and – a hallmark of Sinding – dense with murmurs. It is in three parts, the whole work building on thematic material from the first movement, with the finale gathering together the threads of all the themes. For me it is in the tradition of the sagas, full of the spirit of Viking ships, billowing sails, voyages of plunder and heroic deeds. Sinding himself was, in fact, a rather shy and cautious man. In his lifetime he was known primarily as a symphonist – his first symphony achieved rapid popularity throughout Europe. Like Grieg, he composed many pieces for the piano and many songs – and it is especially his songs one would like to see featured in concert programmes more often than they are. One of his most notable works is his “Fatum” Variations for piano, which holds a special place in the Norwegian canon.

Alf Hurum (1882-1972) was, like Geirr Tveitt, influenced by French music, and many listeners find echoes of Debussy, in particular, in Hurum’s works. This is true of the charming suite *Eventyrland* (“Fairy Tale Land”) from 1920. The short pieces that make up this suite seem to breathe the same air as the paintings of Theodor Kittelsen – they seem close to nature and mystical, but at the same time have a childlike naivety and charm. This is not surprising, bearing in mind that Hurum himself painted seriously, and in this suite it is undoubtedly tone painting we hear. Hurum later gave up composing music in order to devote himself to visual art, and as a consequence did not in fact compose so very much. When he was in his fifties he emigrated to Hawaii, where he reorganised the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra.

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) completed his *Ballade* op. 24 in the spring of 1876. I consider it the most important work in the whole literature of Norwegian piano music. It consists of a set of variations based on a sorrowful folk melody from the Valdres valley, usually known as “The Northland Peasantry” in English. Grieg composed his *Ballade* as an elegy to his mother and father, who had died in 1875; this was also a time when his marriage to Nina was going through a difficult period. The music seems to progress through the different stages of grief, and in it I can find denial, anger, a coming to terms, depression and acceptance. Perhaps resignation is the word which best sums up how the work ends. At all events, the way the music struggles towards that huge trill is deeply disturbing – a heart-rending cry for help – and this is followed by the dreadful resonance of the low E flat, signifying the end of all hope. There is no way back. The main theme gently re-enters – a closing statement that pain is pain. That’s all I want to say about this music and what it means to me. Reticence offers more substance than elucidation. Enough to say that I love the *Ballade* with all my being.

Adventure stories inspire us and allow us to escape into the world of fantasy – and they bring us together. I hope this music can do just that.

Christian Grøvlen, Bergen 2021



Christian Grøvlen is a Norwegian pianist and composer. He has performed as soloist with many of Norway's leading orchestras, has participated in all Norway's music festivals and has played with many different artists. His first album, Bach – Inside Polyphony, was released by 2L and received extremely warm reviews. It was acclaimed as one of the year's best recordings by the Norwegian weekly newspaper Morgenbladet. In addition to his work as soloist, Christian is eagerly sought after by singers as accompanist. The present album, Eventyr, sees him returning to his musical roots. Christian is also director of the KODE art, craft, design and music museums at Troidhaugen, Lysoen and Siljustøl, and of The Edvard Grieg International Piano Competition.







2L (Lindberg Lyd) records in spacious acoustic venues; large concert halls, churches and cathedrals. This is actually where we can make the most intimate recordings. The qualities we seek in large rooms are not necessarily a big reverb, but openness due to the absence of close reflecting walls. Making an ambient and beautiful recording is the way of least resistance. Searching the fine edge between direct contact and openness; that's the real challenge! A really good recording should be able to bodily move the listener. This core quality of audio production is made by choosing the right venue for the repertoire, and balancing the image in the placement of microphones and musicians relative to each other in that venue. There is no method available today to reproduce the exact perception of attending a live performance. That leaves us with the art of illusion when it comes to recording music. As recording engineers and producers we need to do exactly the same as any good musician; interpret the music and the composer's intentions and adapt to the media where we perform. Immersive audio is a completely new conception of the musical experience. Recorded music is no longer a matter of a fixed two-dimensional setting, but rather a three-dimensional enveloping situation. Stereo can be described as a flat canvas, while immersive audio is a sculpture that you can literally move around and relate to spatially; surrounded by music you can move about in the aural space and choose angles, vantage points and positions.

Morten Lindberg balance engineer and recording producer

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This recording was made by Lindberg Lyd AS with DPA microphones and HORUS converters to a PYRAMIX workstation on Ravenna AoIP with Genelec ONE monitoring. Digital eXtreme Definition is a professional audio format that brings analogue qualities in 24 bit at 352.8 kHz sampling rate.

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Geirr Tveitt

- 1 Eolsharpa 16:06

Christian Sinding Sonate, op. 91

- 2 I. Allegro ma non troppo 11:53
3 II. Andante 4:41
4 III. Vivace 8:14

Alf Hurum Eventyrland, op. 16

- 5 I. I den forheksede have 3:07
6 II. Prinsessen leker med guldæblerne 3:06
7 III. De tre trold 5:00
8 IV. Det sner og det sner 3:07
9 V. Tusselag 2:36
10 VI. Nordlysdøtrene 3:43

Edvard Grieg

- 11 Ballade, op. 24 23:28

Christian Grøvlen piano

