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CLASSICS

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

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ABOUT DAVID MONRAD JOHANSEN'S SONGS FOR MALE CHOIR

David Monrad Johansen was born in Vefsn in Nordland County, Norway, on 8 November 1888. His father died when David was barely six years old, and only three of his siblings survived to adulthood. Following a failed second marriage, his mother made a new start by moving with her children to Kristiania (Oslo) in 1904. The break with his childhood home in Helgeland and the encounter with new surroundings in the capital city gave rise to a longing in him that became the artistic driving force throughout his life. He believed himself that impressions of childhood experiences in Vefsn could be detected in his music.

At the age of ten, David Monrad Johansen received his first piano lessons in Mosjøen. In Kristiania he continued his studies with Per Winge, Christian Johnson and Karl Nissen. He made his debut as pianist in Kristiania in 1913 and over time became a much sought-after accompanist.

Monrad Johansen received his basic training in music theory from Per Steenberg, Catharinus Elling and Iver Holter. A year of study at the Academy of Music in Berlin (1915–16) confirmed his misgivings that traditional classical harmony and the legacy of Edvard Grieg stood in the way of his development as a composer. He continued his studies on his own, immersing himself in the modern harmony of A. Eaglefield Hull and Arnold Schoenberg. Together with a systematic study of the piano works of Claude Debussy, he found his way to a new stylistic platform.

Throughout the 1920s, Monrad Johansen developed a simplified style distinguished by elements from Norwegian traditional music and modal harmony. This is clearly evident in *Draumkvædet* (*The Dream Poem*)

for male choir, the song cycle *Nordlands Trompet* (*The Trumpet of Nordland*), and the piano suites based on traditional music from Gudbrandsdalen. The style culminates with the monumental *Voluspå* for choir, soloists and orchestra (1926), with text from the Poetic Edda, regarded as one of Monrad Johansen's major works.

While Monrad Johansen sought out many influences abroad seeking to find his unique tonal language, he is, at the same time, regarded as a standard-bearer of the nationally-oriented musical style that developed in the interim between the two wars. His interest in traditional music did not lie primarily at the melodic level. Rather he regarded traditional music and traditional poetry as vigorous expressions of a genuine indigenous national character or national temperament that could be carried on and refined through music.

In his book *A History of Norwegian Music* (1991) Professor Nils Grinde puts emphasis on Monrad Johansen's constant capacity for artistic renewal:

Throughout his long and productive life, David Monrad Johansen demonstrated his ability to grow and develop in response to new ideas and impulses. The principal works from his later years — 'Five Biblical Songs', the Piano Concerto and the two late chamber music works — show that he retained his creative power and his capacity for artistic renewal.

David Monrad Johansen died in Bærum on 20 February 1974, eighty-five years old.

Draumkvædet (The Dream Poem), op. 7

During the music festival in Helsinki in 1921, Monrad Johansen had been able to hear a work that proved to be a source of new ideas — Finnish composer Aksel Törnudd's piece *Trollruna* (*The Troll Cross*) for male choir. Here the range of expression for a male choir was widened and used in a way completely different from what he knew from Kjerulf's, Nordraak's and Grieg's choral

songs. Back home again he revisited Landstand's collection of traditional Norwegian ballads that had provided material in the past. Here he found his way to *Draumkvædet*, a text that deeply moved him, and in the course of ten days he had completed his first composition for male choir.

In our intangible cultural heritage, *Draumkvædet* has achieved the status of "the Norwegian national ballad", a national symbol. It is a story that expresses both religious belief and an imaginary world of folklore. In it we meet Olav Åsteson, who falls into a deep sleep on Christmas Eve and does not awaken until the day after Twelfth Night (January 6th). He rides to the church and, standing outside the church entrance, he recounts the many dreams he has had. He has travelled far and wide.

*I have been up with the clouds
and down in the ocean's depths,
I have seen the flames of Hell
and part of the Kingdom of Heaven.
For the moon shines
and the roads stretch so wide.*

On his journey, Olav Aasteson witnesses a dramatic struggle between good and evil, before returning to the reality of earthly existence. He concludes his account with advice on how to prepare for the Day of Judgement by means of compassion and good deeds, and, as such, *Draumkvædet* reflects a deep-rooted view of death and the path out of it.

*Blessed is he here on earth
who gives shoes to the poor:
He'll not walk bare-foot
on sharp thorns.
The tongue speaks,
and truth answers on Judgement Day.*

More than 100 versions of *Draumkvædet* have been written down, the most well-known being Moltke Moe's reconstruction in the 1890s from 52 sources. Monrad Johansen uses Moe's version, but he omits large portions of the text both in the beginning and end, placing more importance on the story of Judgement Day, in which Sankte Sålemikkjel (St. Peter) weighs souls on the "skålevikt" (balance scale) and leads those who confess their sins "burt

til Jesum Krist" ("away to Jesus Christ"). He makes the story more concentrated in expression by using a long crescendo with distinct series of chords. Moreover he underscores the compactness of this movement by delaying the refrain until after the last verse and ending it all pensively with a weak *ppp*.

In the folk tradition, *Draumkvædet* has been sung to a number of different melodies, and various composers have set the poem to new music or reworked the old folk melodies. Monrad Johansen however did not know the usual folk melodies. Thus his melodies arose directly from the moods and expression he experienced from the text, without any direct external musical influences. Yet there is a certain quality of traditional music in the style of this work, with some typical melodies. The harmonic picture is somewhat complicated, even though it is solidly rooted in a tonality characterized by the old church modes. In this way Monrad Johansen was able to create a close connection between the text's different dramatic elements and the musical means he put to use.

When the newly founded male choir A Capella under the direction of Ansgar Guldberg was to perform the work during its debut concert in 1923, wicked tongues said that for Guldberg to have performed something like this he must have owed someone a favour. There were chords in *Draumkvædet* that no male choir had ever sung before, and the composer explained in an interview that the style had absolutely nothing to do with beautiful sound:

*When you are to depict hell and sinners
who are to be put in a pot of boiling
tar, you can hardly expect it to result in
beautiful sounds. It's like an avalanche,
total confusion. It's an easy matter
to get a choir to sing in confusion —
alas we hear it all too often — but in
'Draumkvædet' the difficulty is to get
out of the confusion again, out of hell
and move on.*

The work received an overwhelming reception in the capital city's newspapers. Monrad Johansen had created a masterful work! For this he also was rewarded by the academic faculty with

a prize of 600 crowns from the “University Fund To Promote Norwegian Male Singing”.

Tre Mannskor
(Three Songs for Male Choir), op. 10
Gammelnorsk folkediktning
(Old Norwegian Folk Poetry)

Inspired by the positive reception *Draumkvædet* had received, Monrad Johansen continued to compose for male choir, and he continued to find his texts among the old Norwegian folksongs. His opus 10, *Gammelnorsk folkediktning* (Old Norwegian Folk Poetry), from 1925, consists of three decidedly different short movements: “Hjorten spelar” (“The Stag At Play”); the dramatic “Ette' striden paa Rusarvollanne” (“After the Battle of Roncevaux Pass”), a Norwegian free adaptation of the *Song of Roland*; and, finally, “Skjenkarsveinen” (“The Alehouse Lad”), a humorous drinking song with both textual and melodic challenges in a furious tempo. All three movements represented a longed-for renewal of the

male choir repertoire, and once more the compositions were honoured with a prize from the “Fund To Promote Norwegian Male Singing”.

Tre mannskor
(Three Songs for Male Choir), op. 17

Around 1930 Monrad Johansen wrote three songs that he collected in his opus no. 17. Two of the texts were taken from works of his poet friends in Gudbrandsdalen, Tore Ørjasæter and Olav Aukrust, while the third was a description of a seaside atmosphere from northern Norway written by Jonas Lie. These songs, too, are written in the same spirit as the aforementioned and were regarded as a contribution to the renewal of the male choir repertoire.

“Ættararv” (“Ancestors’ Legacy”), based on the Ørjasæter text, is dedicated to the Helgeland Singers’ Association and was commissioned by the association for the large national choral convention held in Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim the

summer of 1930. The text is taken from Tore Ørjasæter’s first collection of poetry entitled *Ættararv*, published in 1908 and characterized by its homage to nature and to a hereditary responsibility to one’s lineage and cultural background. The text’s powerful message is reflected in its musical treatment. The special quality of the song was noted by one journalist who wrote in the local Mosjøen newspaper after a later performance: *In Monrad Johansen’s music we seem to hear the stalwart, heavy tramping of faithful peasant families.*

Ørjasæter’s text is a homage to the free-holding farming class that generation after generation perpetuates the continuity of the lineage. But Ørjasæter knew that standing and productivity could vary from family to family. Thus all male heirs had an important obligation to take care of themselves and safe-guard the family’s integrity, so they could stand with head held high:

*Bow down and pray in your
ancestral temple, bear on your
brow the mark of your lineage.*

Olav Aukrust’s “Bånsull” (“Lullaby”) with the subtitle “Ein haustkveld” (“An Autumn Evening”) is a mixture of jovial images and a homage to farming life in the mountains, as presented to a small child. The poem is from the collection entitled *Hamar i hellom* (Craggy Precipice), published in 1926. The text was similar to the children’s rhymes Monrad Johansen knew from Bernt Støylen’s collection that he had worked with in 1926 (op. 14): sensitive moods, many imbued with a mystical quality. The song is dedicated to the student choral society and was performed for the first time as part of the society’s anniversary concert in the University Great Hall on 20 November 1930. Following the concert, Reidar Mjøen, music critic for the newspaper *Aftenposten*, wrote somewhat sarcastically: “*Bånsull*” elevates an obscure, ragged and awkward text of Olav Aukrust in his rural vernacular upward into music’s illuminating light...

The text of the third song included in op. 17, “En fembøring under seil” (“An Open Boat Under Sail”), is taken from Jonas Lie’s novel *Tremasteren Fremtiden*

(*The Three-Master 'Fremtiden'*) from 1872. In the novel it is the skipper of the boat, Elias Røst, who recites the poem to the bridal party. The “fembøring” (traditional open boat), was the fishing boat in most widespread use in northern Norway and Trøndelag in the 1800s and early 1900s. In the poem, Jonas Lie also pays homage to another type of boat, “jekta”, the small cargo boat that played a decisive role in trade between the northern parts of Norway and Bergen and Trondheim.

An open boat under sail is a pleasing sight when it streaks through the sea in a three-reef gale with an able skipper at the helm.

In his tonality, Monrad Johansen attaches importance to melodic variation and a structure that creates unity. A light, almost jolly melody winds its way forward in swift three-quarter time, propelling the movement ahead and accentuating the textual images. The mood is interrupted by a contrasting section, melodically as well as rhythmically. The last verse of the

text about “a ‘jekt’ under sail” stands as an independent section, before the first section is repeated, binding everything together. The song was performed for the first time in the University Great Hall on 6 November 1933 during the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Jonas Lie’s birth, attended by the King, Crown Prince and members of the Norwegian Government.

Tre mannskor til tekster av Ivar Aasen (Three Songs for Male Choir to texts of Ivar Aasen), op. 19

One of the most popular songs of the Norwegian male choir repertoire over time has been David Monrad Johansen’s “Gamle Norig” (“Old Norway”). The text is from Ivar Aasen’s collection of poetry entitled *Symra. Tvo Tylfter med Visor og Rim (The Anemone. Two Dozen Songs and Rhymes)* from 1863. The song was begun in 1923, the background for the composition being, according to Monrad Johansen, his contact with the author Olav Aukrust and the discussions they had

regarding “the nation’s cultural destiny”. But the song was not completed. Then in the winter of 1926, upon receiving a request for a new composition from Guldberg’s academic choir for its 10-year anniversary, he returned to the rough draft and quickly finished the song. Its first performance was on 7 May and it was published the same year by Norsk Musikforlag in its series for male choir. It was instantly popular and was later published in a version for mixed choir. “Our third national anthem” was a characterization attributed to the song.

Ivar Aasen’s text describes the Norwegian landscape and everyday life in this context. “Gamle Norig”, like a number of his poems, is grounded in a national realism, in which the nation, land, people, and day-to-day life are important themes. As a national anthem it does not pay homage to the nation’s historical enterprises and its epic heroes. It is a contemporary portrayal seen from the perspective of the rural inhabitants. In an interview with Monrad Johansen in the newspaper *Dagbladet*, Paul Gjesdahl described how he experienced the text

in Monrad Johansen’s musical setting, a description that also gave the song a national political perspective:

It is our own song, created in faith and poverty, without delight, but filled with happiness, it is not about loving fatherland with enthusiasm or vigour, but rather about an embittered belief in and affection for the land despite everything. Although one cannot march to it, it will perhaps one fine day displace The Internationale’s dreadful and inexorable harmonies.

The monumental character of the text is accentuated by the chordal style Monrad Johansen has chosen for the first and last verse. The melody is relatively limited in scope and its harmonic framework is characterized by something regarded then as innovative for choral style: the use of the old church modes. The second verse has a contrasting melody with contrapuntal accompaniment. The song ends with a coda in which the text’s central message is brought home: “Old Norway, most northerly situated, is our own ancestral land.”

Toward the end of the 1920s Monrad Johansen was busy developing his stylistic platform. Based on neoclassicism and a new understanding of linearity in music after studies in counterpoint with Professor Hermann Grabler in Leipzig in 1933 and 1935, he developed a style that would distinguish the last third of his not-so-extensive opus list.

After a lengthy time practicing and studying technical principles under Grabner's rigorous supervision, Monrad Johansen was then intent on turning his new knowledge into "true, spiritual musical expression". Counterpoint was, in his opinion, not a magical formula and guarantee for a good artistic result. He now turned to two other texts from Ivar Aasen's poetry collection *Symra*: "Dei gamle fjelli" and "Gamle grendi" ("The Old Mountains" and "Old Hamlets") in his effort to put into practice what he had learned. On 25 April 1935 he wrote home to his wife Lissa:

Yesterday, quite by accident actually, I composed "Dei gamle fjelli" as a 4-part canon. I am finding my way

more and more into polyphonic technique, which in a way is much more comfortable working with than homophonic.

Both songs were in the repertoire of The Norwegian Student Choral Society for its concert commemorating its 90th anniversary on 20 November 1935, together with new songs of other composers. Reidar Mjøen wrote for the newspaper *Aftenposten*:

Were Monrad Johansen's two new songs performed this evening the best addition to our choral literature? Once again it is Ivar Aasen to whom the composer has turned in his search for proto-Norwegian cadence and impulse. "Dei gamle Fjelli" ("The Old Mountains") has a tightly structured choral movement, which develops from unison singing in the first verse via an interesting use of the canon form to an ever larger polyphonic force, culminating in the powerful fortissimo of the final verse. The other song, "Gamle Grendi" ("Old Hamlets"), retains

a delicate, lyrical-melancholy tone, which together with its finely harmonized voicings imparts to the song a characteristically intimate and discreet mood. It received enthusiastic applause and the audience was keen to have the composer acknowledged.

Monrad Johansen had set Ivar Aasen to music before with noticeable success. "Gamle Norig" turned up repeatedly in choir repertoires. When his three Aasen songs became his opus no. 19, they represented the stylistic development Monrad Johansen had gone through in the years from 1923 to 1935.

Tre skaldekvad (Three Lays of the Skalds), op. 27

In 1930 Monrad Johansen composed the work *Sigvat Skald* (*Sigvat the Skald*), op. 16, for tenor soloist and orchestra, inspired by French composer Arthur Honegger's music. The text was taken from Snorri Sturluson's sagas of the kings,

translated by his wife Lissa, who shared his interest in the sagas.

At the end of the 1940s, he once again turned to the sagas. Lissa had prepared three texts all having as theme the battle at Stiklestad in 1030. Monrad Johansen wished to further explore the polyphonic movement technique he had used in the Aasen songs in 1935 and find out whether it could be further developed and offer new challenges to the male choir literature. It was now essential that the Norse soul in these texts not be affected by his schooling in German counterpoint. The result was *Tre skaldekvad* (*Three Lays of the Skalds*), opus 27, for three-voice male choir.

In his tonal language we once again perceive the influence of the church modes that were so typical for Monrad Johansen's choral style in the 1920s. But the linear interplay creates an expanded harmonic palette that contributes in an expressive way to the characteristic overall sound.

In the first song it is Tormod Kolbrunar-skald who relates his experiences in the battle:

*Olaf's heart was ablaze in the
Battle of Stiklestad.
Bloody steel bit into coats of mail
of the king's combative troops.
Like a forest in a storm we swayed, bat-
tered by the force of the arrows.*

Monrad Johansen lets a strong fanfare-like motif be succeeded by rapid passages with long gradual movements and fugued entrances. This lends a hurried quality to the song and underscores the dramatic intensity of the text.

Tormod continues his account in the second song. He has entered a small chamber filled with men who have been wounded in battle. A lone woman labouring to bind the men's wounds approaches Tormod, who sings his lay:

*You are startled, humble woman,
that I am pale and bloody,
it was Danish weapons that
caused this ...*

*near my heart I felt
the sharp bite of the iron.*

The mood of the song is calmer and the volume reduced to a pensive piano. The imitating movement technique creates a sort of echo effect in the sound which in the end is heard in harmony with the words "I felt the sharp bite of the iron".

In the third song it is Saint Olaf's close friend, Sigvat Skald, who speaks. Sigvat had been in Rome on a pilgrimage at the time of the Battle of Stiklestad. He learns of Olaf's death on his journey home and is overcome with grief. At home in Trondheim once again he sorrowfully recalls the happy days together with the king:

*All of Norway's lofty mountains
seemed to laugh when Olaf was alive.
[...]
Ever since, it seems to me, the
mountainsides lie there ominously
displeased
The mountain is stooped toward the
sea. The skald is in mourning.*

The musical mood changes from elated enthusiasm to the quiet, somber tones near the end, a kind of Saint Olaf funeral march.

Three Lays of the Skalds was dedicated to two of Monrad Johansen's deceased friends: Olav Aukrust and Jens Lindberg. Stockholm's Student Choral Society premiered the work at a concert in March 1953. The songs were performed for the first time in Norway two and a half years later at the 110th anniversary celebration of the Oslo Craftsmen's Choral Society. 'Tre skaldekvad' [...] possesses an inner power and is rich in images, yet represents a degree of difficulty that seems to lie just above the performance capabilities of a large male choir, wrote critic Hans Jørgen Hurum after the Norwegian premiere. Indeed the songs are demanding both for the singers and for a conductor who seeks to be faithful to the musical essence of the pieces. Consequently the work has not become a classic in our male choir repertoire.

— Ivar Roger Hansen
(Translated by Jim Skurdall)

ABOUT JOHAN KVANDAL'S SONGS FOR MALE CHOIR

Johan Kvandal (1919–1999) was the son of David Monrad Johansen and his wife Amunda (Lissa), née Holmsen. He was christened with the surname of his father, but in 1939 — when he decided to become a composer — he adopted the name by which he has been known to posterity. In the beginning he had a touch of “second-generation complex”, but it was not long before he was standing on his own two feet and able to create his own artistic profile.

Kvandal did not receive any significant amount of instruction from his father, but he did admit that having seen him

at work had had an inspiring effect on him. To this was added the vibrant artist milieu to which his father belonged and in the midst of which the son grew up. In particular, his father's relatively wide-ranging output for male choir must have instilled a desire in the son to try his hand at the same genre. While playing out in the street as a five-year-old, Johan could hear through an open window his father singing and playing passages from “Skjenkarsveinen” (“The Alehouse Lad”), which would become one of the elder composer's most popular choir songs. This was but one of many memories that stuck in the mind of this sensitive child.

After the war — when Kvandal was in his late twenties — he spent several years in Stockholm and gained membership into Daniel Åhlén's renowned choir of Engelbrekt Church. In this way he became acquainted with the choir literature from the inside, and upon completion of his studies he was himself active as conductor of a number of choirs. Moreover he completed a degree in organ and served as organist of Vålerengen Church from 1959 to 1974.

The works of Henrik Wergeland (1808–1845) had a special status in Kvandal's childhood home, and as an adult he often spoke of Wergeland as his favourite author. As early as Christmas 1919, when Kvandal was but a few months old, he received *Vinterblommer i Barnekammeret* (*Winter Flowers in the Nursery*) as a gift, Wergeland's collected poetry for children. Also at a young age he was able to hear some of Wergeland's hospital songs set to music by Eivind Groven, which made an indelible impression on him. In 1946 he composed the first of his songs based on Wergeland texts: “Mørk er min sjæl” (“Dark Is My Soul”) and “Til min Gyldenlak” (“To My Wallflower”), both included in his song collection op. 10.

As a young man in love Kvandal lost himself in Wergeland's Stella poems and wrote his “Sang til Stella” (“Song to Stella”) for soprano and string orchestra, op. 6 (1946/47). Stella (meaning ‘star’) was Wergeland's ideal woman — more an offspring of his imagination — with whom he would be united in a higher realm after death. Some years later — in 1950 — he wrote his “Drikkevisen”

(“Drinking Song”), known also as “Champagnevisen” (“Champagne Song”) and also based on a Wergeland text. He used the first, second and fourth verse of the poem “Kongens skål i champagne” (“Champagne Toast to the King”), which Wergeland wrote as a homage to Carl Johan on the occasion of his visit to Norway in 1838. There were presumably those who thought an organist ought not have anything to do with drinking songs, but Kvandal found consolation in knowing that the “Fund To Promote Norwegian Male Singing” had awarded him 500 crowns for this song.

In 1963 Kvandal set a new Wergeland text to music for male choir, “Efter Tidens Leilighet”. Kvandal often referred to this song as “Stenen i Stefanens panne” (“The Stone in Stephen's Brow”) from the first line of the first verse. The poet based his text on the murder of the first Christian martyr — Stephen — as told in the Acts of the Apostles, chapters 6 and 7. Saint Stephen had unusual strength of mind, and many were envious of him. False rumours were spread, and in a speech in his own defense, he turned the tables on

his accusers. They became enraged, and lacking adequate counter-arguments, they drove him outside the city gate and stoned him to death. In retrospect Stephen was right of course. Wergeland used the story to engage in polemics against his own adversaries, and Kvandal, too, can be said to have used an allegorical approach to this material. Both reached the same conclusion: “In every way be yourself! / That is the art of success, my soul!” The song is dedicated to the Student Choral Society in Bergen, which, conducted by Kjell Leikvoll, premiered it during the Male Choir Convention in Håkonshallen on 12 June 1964. Kvandal’s contribution was written especially for the occasion.

Kvandal is known as a traditionalist, with roots in traditional folk music. He liked to speak of his tonal language as modern tonality. For a long time, “things Norwegian” remained paramount. During a stay in Paris from 1952 to 1954, however, while studying with Nadia Boulanger, he was exposed to influences more international in scope. Nor was he unaffected by the modernist artistic

currents that manifested themselves in Norway in the 1960s. And after the Finn, Erik Bergman, had visited Oslo on 28 May 1965 with his outstanding choir, “Muntra Musikanter” (“Jolly Musicians”), Kvandal was bitten by the male choir bug for good. What the Finns had demonstrated with male voices a cappella had been, in his imagination, beyond the realm of possibility. It was, above all, the twelve-tone-inspired “Ave Maria” of Einojuhani Rautavaara that he found most stimulating.

Hosting the concert was the Norwegian Student Choral Society, with its conductor at the time, Sverre Bruland. After the visit, Bruland urged Kvandal to give the genre a try. In his search for texts, he perused an anthology of Nordic literature and fell for the Danish poet Carsten Hauch (1790-1872) and his poem “Pleiaderne ved midnat” (“The Pleiades At Midnight”). The Pleiades is a cluster of stars in the constellation Taurus, known as the Seven Sisters.

In Greek mythology the Pleiades are the daughters of the titan Atlas and

nymph Pleione. They were coveted by the demigod Orion, who pursued them for years, until almighty Zeus, weary of it all, placed them in the heavens as stars. Hauch’s text encapsulates the relationship between moment and eternity, the incomprehensibility of infinite space, and how small we humans are in the big picture. In Kvandal’s opinion, the poem — written in 1861 — could just as well have been written by a modern poet.

The work is bold in its harmonies and demanding to sing. It also has a speaking choir segment. When Bruland got to look at it, he shrank back and said that “no, this won’t work.” For Kvandal it was a cold shower that undermined his confidence. He spoke of it himself as a “strange” work, while emphasizing at the same time that the text — with its sights out in space — was first-rate. He let “The Pleiades” lie, and it was not sung until the Christiania Male Choir reclaimed it and, together with conductor Marius Skjølaas, premiered it at Sentralen in Oslo on 23 March 2023 — accordingly, nearly 60 years after it was written.

— Morten Gaathaug
(Translated by Jim Skurdall)



DAVID MONRAD JOHANSEN 1888–1974

Draumkvædet, op. 7

Tekst:
Gammelnorsk folkepoesi

Eg la meg ne um joleftan,
sterkan svevnen fekk;
vakna kje fyrr um trettandagjen,
folkje åt kyrkjunn gjekk.
Fer maanen skine
og vegjine felle so vide.

Eg hev vori upp med sky,
upp med sky hev eg vori
og neatt paa havsens bunni; –
den, som vil mine fotspor fylgje,
han lær kje av bliom munni.
Fer maanen skine
og vegjine felle so vide.

Tidi hev fari so fort fer meg,
eg heve vori so vide,
eg heve set åt heite helvite
og ein del av himmerikje.

Der er heitt i helvite,
heitar hell nokon hyggje,
der hengde dei ‘pivi ein tjøruketil
og brytja ne i ein presterygge.

Sume fôr ivi Grimaraasen
og sume ivi Skaalestrand,
men dei som fôr ivi Gjallarhylen,
dei kome so vaate fram.

Tidi hev fari so fort fer meg,
eg heve vori so vide,
eg heve set åt heite helvite
og ein del av himmerikje.

Eg er so trøytt og ferdemo,
men enno so mune eg brenne,
høyrrer vatn og ser det inkje,
under jordi so mune det renne.
Fer maanen skine
og vegjine felle so vide.

Inkje hneggjar soten min,
inkje so gjøydde min hunde,
inkje so gol dei ottefuglan’,
det tottest meg vera vont.
Fer maanen skine
og vegjine felle so vide.

Eg kan noko av kvorjom,
derfyr so tikjest eg frod,
eg var longe i molli moka,
ha eg tott den dauen god.
Fer maanen skine
og vegjine felle so vide.

Saa tok eg paa ein vetterstig
alt paa mi høgre hand:
der såg eg meg til paradis,
det lyser ivi vide land!

Der såg eg meg til paradis,
der var meg ingen mann kjende,
berre ho sæle Gudmor mi
med raue gull paa hende.

Der såg eg atte Gudmor mi,
meg mune kje bedre gange:
Reis du deg til broksvalin,
der skal domen stande.

Saa kom ferdi norantil
og den rei no so kvast:
fyre rei han Grutte Gråskjeg
med sitt store brass.

Der kom ferdi norantil
det totte eg vera verst:
fyre rei han Grutte Gråskjeg,
han rei paa svartan hest.

Der kom ferdi sunnantil,
det tottest meg vera best,
fyre rei sankte Såle-Mikkjel,
han rei paa kvitan hest.

Der kom ferdi sunnantil,
og den rei no so tvist:
fyre rei sankte Såle-Mikkjel
næste Jesum Krist.

Der kom ferdi sunnantil,
hon tottest meg vera traas;
fyre rei sankte Såle-Mikkjel,
og luren und’ armen låg.

Det var sankte Såle-Mikkjel,
han bles i luren lange:
«Og no skal alle synde-såline
fram fer domen stande!»

Men då skolv alle synde-såline,
som ospelauv fer vinde,
og kvor den, kvor den sål der var,
ho grèt fer syndine sine.

Det var sankte Såle-Mikkjel,
han vøg i skålevigt;
so vøg han alle synde-såline
burt til Jesum Krist.

Han la seg ne um joleftan
sterkan svevnen fekk;
vakna kje fyrr um trettandagjen,
folkje åt kyrkjun gjekk.
Og det var Olav Åsteson,
som hev sovi so lengje.

Tre Mannskor, op. 10

Tekst:
Gammelnorsk folkepoesi

Skjenkarsveinen, op. 10, nr. 1
Skjenkarsvein paa golve gjeng med
sylvarhonn i hende;
drikk'kon til, Knut Gunnarson,
du er baad'maag og frende!

Uppe sat eg førre notti, uppe sit eg enn,
eg takkar kokk og kjellarman so lenge
tunna renn.

Der heng eit honn paa veggen
det me vani kalla Klaa'i
og det so skal med drikke
'tor me knipe syninn' baee.

Eg drakk av hennar Sløkefrid
av hennas liljo lange,
du tappe full den lindestrut
og lat'kje tome stande!

Fram so kjem ho gamlegod
stødar seg fram med stolo:
eg held det fer eit missmenne
som sparar paa øle i jolo.
Sparar du paa øle i jolo?

Drukkid er den øldrykkinn og
kjellarsveinen seie det tryt,
han skal fram som veitsla gjera
og heve fer litid sytt, han.
Heve du fer litid sytt, du?

Ette' striden paa

Rusarvollanne, op. 10, nr. 2

*Dette kvæde synes at være hentet fra
visen om «Magnus kongen og Roland» og
beskriver da hærens hjemkomst fra striden
paa Rusarvollanne (Roncesvalles).*

Heim kjem drenginn' av heido,
der hava dei legid so lengi:
Statt upp Gudro, tapp i trøys
fer trøytt og mode drengir!

Hurdi nurkar i kaldan jønni
og jøklane heng ikring,
eg totte lenger den vetternotti
enn halve alderen min.

No hev eg so lengi ferdast
at folkje totte det var furdo,
det hev kje anna mi føde vori
hell' brum og briskebær i urdo.

Inkje er eg or steini stukken
og inkje av flintegrjoti
men eg er ein av dei Hovlandskjempunn
som horver so hart imoti.

Det var Tjöstvald Haukvaldson
han var so raske paa laupo
inkje hunden, katten, hell' fljugande
kraaka kan fylgje dessin guten paa laupo.
I dans vil han Leidulf.

Eg kom meg ut paa Skaalebakken
eg trottad kje lenger fram,
fer eg var nakin og naaleklædd
og blodi 'ta brynja rann.

Hesten bitt eg i stogustolpen
og sverdi sting eg i skjaa
so tek eg hatten av hovudi
og gjeng inn i stoga daa.

No tek eg upp den beingnusten,
som ligge heran paa bordi,
so slær eg til den raudleitte guten
som snikir etter kvor manns ordi.

Du møter i morgo paa Oddestraumann
med dei pilinn bjarte.
Er det karmannshugen i deg
so ber inkje kalvehjarte!

Du møter i morgo i Ormestad
der skal me rjoda pilinn i blod,
sit inkje heima paa bradsteinann med
hine kjettunn og glo!

Hjorten spelar, op. 10, nr. 3

Hjorten spelar i heido nord,
han spriker si klo, hau!
so gjere alle dei Herjus syninn
som giljar med ord.

Hjorten spelar i heido nord,
han rekker sin hals, hau!
so gjere alle dei Herjus syninn
som giljar med fals.

Hjorten spelar i heido nord,
han bøyger sit kne, hau!
so gjere alle dei Herjus syninn
som giljar i løynd.

Inkje fer du dotter mi,
hon er inkje vaksin enno,
men me skal møtast paa leikarvollo
og rauden raade for hende.

Litin er hesten min
og litid er han verd,
aa jaumen ber han sjave meg
og saa mit gode sverd.

Tre Mannskor, op. 17

Ættar-arv, op. 17, nr. 1

Tekst: Tore Ørjasæter (1886—1968)

Erso du ærar din ættarfar,
du erver med æra din ættargard.
Å sitja på garden, son etter faren,
det er den likaste lagnad for karen.

Men ofte det høvde og soleis var hendt,
det segjest for sannrøynt og gamalt kjendt,
at etter ein samlar kjem det ein snøydar
og etter ein aukar kjem det ein øydar.

D'er adel i jorda, som lag på lag
er odla av ætta frå fyrste dag.
Og federne bygde med umsut og bøner,
heimen som ol seg i edle søner.

Å ja det er sandt som dei gamle har sagt
d'er ymse med adel og odelsmagt.
Og best som ei ætt i si livskraft skein
so brotna den briknaste odelstein.

Ei lukke for alle den lagnad var
å hava til far ein fagna kar.
Han kan ikkje rakvaksen ryggen retta
den mann som er ein krusling i ætta.

Vyrd då deg sjølv og di eigi ætt
so vyrder du ogso ein annan manns rett.
Bygg deg og bed i ditt ættartempel.
Ber i di panna din ættarstempel.

Bånsull (Ein haustkvell), op. 17, nr. 2

Tekst: Olav Aukrust (1883–1929)

Å skin i skardom.
Hanen gjel og røyk stig på gardom.
Hjalar hjuring høgt i hø.
Rim på blad og bleikna bø.
Gulnar konn i dalom
og visnar lyng i lidom.

Byssam, å fjaggen.
Kjellargufs og godt øl på kaggen.
Øl til gjest og gangarmann.
Gamel-Synne mjølk i spann,
snilde Gamel-Synne
og Sissel Søtilbakka.

Myrbær på Mytingen.
Tett på tuva raud finn vi Tytingen.
Soli skein so varm og blid
hegg og bring og blåbærlid
kjem me bær åt bonom
ja bær åt alle bonom.

Byssam, byssam båne.
Langt burt i berg og blankan blåne.
Rauberg stul og Ljosli gauk,
vakkert vær og ingen hauk,
berre eg og du, san,
ska' der i fjellom bu, san.

Liten Tusul bror,
han vert nok både sterk, han, og stor, san,
Fange fisk i djupan tjønn,
gå på ski og skjote bjønn,
det skal Tusul bror ja
når han blir sterk og stor, ja.

Haust og hustre ute.
Regnet slær og tandrar på rute.
Hujo sit i høgan hjell,
rekargaupa gøyr i fjell,
Tusul ska' få byrse,
å byssam bån, å bysje.

En Fembøring under Seil, op. 17, nr. 3

Tekst: Jonas Lie (1883–1908)

En Fembøring under Seil
er et lysteligt Syn
når den vasker i Sjøen
for en «tre Klørs» Vind

og en Høvedsmann god ved sitt Styre;
Ja, når Odder og Næs flyve pilsnart forbi,
må sig glæde den Fisker som sidder deri,
fast at Sjøskvættet væder hans Hyre.

En Fembøring er på Havet
så lidet et Skål,
medens Bølger går om den
som Bjerg og Dal
og den skal sig i Uveiret klare;
ja der roes i Sjøen med Møde mangt Tag,
og der seiles til Ripen så mangen en Dag,
hvor det går gjennom Tyngsel og Fare.

Men en Jægt under seil er et frydeligt Syn
når den stævner til Midtmasters
ladet til By'n
og med Frugten af Vinterens Dage,
når den ankrende flagger
der foran sit Hjem,
fordi alting er kommet så velberget frem
og den Velstand nu bringer tilbage.

Tre Mannskor
til tekster av Ivar Aasen, op. 19
Tekst: Ivar Aasen (1813–1896)

Dei gamle Fjelli, op. 19, nr. 1
Dei gamle Fjell i Syningom
er alltid eins aa sjaa,
med same gamle Bryningom
og same Toppom paa.
I Bygdom byggja Sveinarne,
og Huset stender laust;
men dei gamle Merkesteinarne
dei standa lika traust.

Paa Fjelli er det leikande
aa ganga til og fraa
og kring um Toppen reikande
so vidt um Land aa sjaa:
til Havet kring um Strenderna
med Skip som Fuglar smaa,
og til Fjelli kring um Grenderna
med tusund Bakkar blaa.

Der er so mange Hendingar
i Bygdom komne til;
me sjaa so mange Vendingar
alt paa eit litet Bil.
Dei hava snutt um Vollarne
og flutt og rudt og bygt;

men dei gode gamle Kollarne
dei standa lika trygt.

So stod dei gjennom Tiderna,
vel mange tusund Aar;
og Graset voks um Liderna,
og Lauvet kom kvar Vaar;
og Vinden tok um Topparne
og Vatnet tok um Fot;
men dei gilde gamle Kropparne
dei toko traust i mot.

Av Hav kom Sjomann sigande
og lengtad' etter Land,
daa saag han Fjelli stigande
og kjendest ved si Strand.
Daa kom det Mod i Gutarne,
som saag sin Fødestad.
Ja dei gode gamle Nutarne
dei gjera Hugan glad.

Gamle Grendi, op. 19, nr. 2
Tidt eg minnest ein gamall Gard
med store Tre og Runnar.
Vollar, Bakkar og Berg og Skard
og Blomster paa grøne Grunnar.
Der eg hadde meg so godt eit Rom:
Hus og Mark med baade Bær og Blom,

alt eg nøytt som ein Eigedom
med baade Lut og Lunnar.

Der var Dalar og Lider nog,
der Lur og Bjøllor klungo;
Der var Ruster og fager Skog,
der tusund Fuglar sungo.
Tett ved Stova stod ei Bjørk so breid,
der hadde Skjorerna sitt gamle Reid,
Staren song i kvar Topp, som beid,
og Erlor i Tunet sprungo.

Var det nokon, som der leid vondt
og vardt fyre Tap og Spilla,
braadt det spurdest um Bygdi rundt,
og alle tykte, det var illa.
Ofta minnest eg mi gamle Grend,
naar eg framand uti Verdi stend,
heimlaus, frendelaus og litet kjend,
og likar paa Leiken illa.

Gamle Norig, op. 19, nr. 3
Gamle Norig, nørdest i Grendom,
er vaart eget Ættarland.
Der er Hav, som heilt aat Endom
leikar um den lange Strand;
Der er Vikar og Votn og Øyar,
tusund Fjorðar og tusund Fjell,

Snøydor, der sjeldan Snjoen tøyar,
Dalar, der Fossen, diger fell.

Leid er vel den lange Vetter,
endaa grøn vaar Granskog stend,
og naar Lauv i Lidom spretter,
fagre Liter fær vaar Grend.
Store Dagar og stutte Næter
lida lett um den ljose Jord;
Strand og Fjord og Fjell og Sæter
skiner av Sol fraa Sud og Nord.

Born av deim, som bygde Landet,
er paa Tuftom endaa til;
Garden stend i same Standet,
bygd og bøtt som Bonden vil.
Van til Møda, meir enn til Kjæla,
leikar Lyden paa Land og Sjo.
Giv han sitje med Sømd og Sæla
trutt paa Tuftom i Trygd og Ro!

Tre Skaldekvad, op. 27

Hett luet Olavs hjerte, op. 27, nr. 1

Tekst: Tormod Kolbrunarskald
(998–1030)

Tormod Kolbrunarskald stod under kongens merke på Stiklestad. Han blev hårdt såret og gik sammen med andre bort fra slaget og hjem til husene. Der sat han en stund og hørte på mennenes tale. Det meste som blev sagt var at hver fortalte om det han hadde set i kampen, og det blev snakket om hvordan folk gik fram. Noen roste mest kong Olavs tapperhet, men noen nevnte andre menn ikke mindre. Da kvad Tormod:

Hett luet Olavs hjerte
i sverdlek på Stiklestad.

Blodig bet stålet i brynjer
på kongens kampglade skarer.
Lik skog i storm vi svaiet
pisket av piledrevet.
Fremst gikk kongen
i flokken av våghalser våpendjerne.

Du undres hugmilde kvinde, op. 27, nr. 2

Tekst: Tormod Kolbrunarskald
(998–1030)

Tormod gik siden bort til en liten stue og der gik han inn. Det var mange menn der inne som var ille såret og det var en kone der som bandt om sårene deres. Det var ild på gulvet og hun varmet vann til å vaske sårene i. Tormod satte sig ned borte ved døren, og det gik folk ut og inn og stellte med dem som var såret. Da så lægekonen ham inn i ansiktet og sa: «Det er følt så bleik denne mannen er! Hvorfor er du slik?» Da kvad Tormod:

Du undres hugmilde kvinde,
at jeg er blek og blodig,
det voldte de danske våpen
og dype merker av Dagsrid.
Ei har jeg friske farver
få av sår blir fagre,
men gjerne jeg bad dig, blide,
låne mig blomstens liter.
Malmen den mørke
drevet med makt igjennem meg jog,
nær hjertet jeg kjendte jernet bite så kvasst.

Alle de høie fjell, op. 27, nr. 3

Tekst: Sigvat Skald (995–1045)

Sigvat skald var på pilgrimsferd til Rom da slaget stod på Stiklestad. Først på veien nordover fik han høre om slaget og om kong Olavs fall, og dette var en stor sorg for ham. Da han kom til Norge drog han hjem til gården sin i Trondheimen. Det heter i sagaen, at Sigvat likte sig ille hjemme; en dag gik han ute og kvad, - og det er vel i erindringen om de glade, lykkelige dager sammen med kongen, og i sorgen over tapet av ham, at han kvæder følgende:

Alle de høie fjell i hele Norge
mig syntes å le da Olav levet.
Bør hadde bølgens hester da Olav levet.
Siden synes mig lien
ligge der truende, ublid.
Fjellet luter mot havet.
Sorg har skalden i eie.



JOHAN KVANDAL 1919–1999

Drikkevise

Tekst:
Henrik Wergeland (1808–1845)

Champagnen er min Yndlingsdrik,
og ikke min alene.
Den funkler med Demantens Blik,
som Vand af Ædelstene.

Ja Edens Himmel efterlod
sit Solskin i dens Druer.
Den bruser som Serafens Blod,
naar hans Begeistring luer.

Gid altid for alt Skjønt og Ret,
i Fred og i Kampagne,
vort Sind maa være lyst og let,
og fyrigt som Champagne!

Pleiaderne ved Midnatt, op. 25
Tekst: Carsten Hauch (1790–1872)

Vi ere de natlige Væversker,
Der sanke de usynlige Traade
Fra Melkeveiens yderste Rundkreds,
Hvor Vævens Ende staaer.

Svævende Nattesnyer,
Aldrig trættede,
Flyvere uden Vinger,
Med hvem dog ingen Fugl
Kan maale sig i Flugt.

For os er Tiden knap begyndt,
Skjønndt hine Døgnfluer af Verdner,
Nysudrugede,
Flyvende Fnug i det uhyre Lufthav,
Drømmer om Æoner og Evigheder,
Og troe, at Enden er der,
Skjønndt de ei endnu have fuldendt
Et eneste Kredsløb
Omkring de fastforbundne Atlasdøtre,
De Lysøiede,
Hvis Blik funkler igjennem Sløret,
Og der bærer utallige Verdnere Tryk,
Uden at mærke det;
Og der ligne svulmende Druer,
Fra hvilke Livets Drik nedstrømmer.

Hvad I kalde tusinde Aar,
Er kun et kløvet Sekund,
For kort til at vort Øies Blink
Deri
Kan naae den Nærmeste blandt vore
Døttre.
Som kredser i Melkeveiens Ring.

For os er Eders længste Sorg
Kun som Døgnfluens dirrende Vingeslag
Før dens hurtige Død.

Og dog er ogsaa vi Timelighedens Børn,
Og selv de længste Baner,
Hvori lysende Verdner dreie sig,
Ere for Intet at regne
Mod Evighedens usynlige Kreds,
Hvortil Tiderne aldrig naae;
Og skjønndt vi udmaale dem
Med Millioner af Aar,
Ere de kun som en Strøm,
Der udtørres og hensvinder
i en Sommerdag,
Mod det uendelige Hav,
der aldrig udtørres,
I de høie Aanders Rige,
Som forløstes fra Tidernes Tryk.

Efter Tidens Leilighed
Tekst: Henrik Wergeland (1808–1845)

Stenen i Stefanens Pande – –
Den er Løgneren mod det Sande.
Taabelige, grumme Haand,
som vil sigte paa en Aand!
Ha, hvad Sejersglands, der bryder
af det Saar, hvis Blodstrøm flyder!

Løgneren kun Sekunden vinder.
Intet Sandhedsord forsvinder.
Som et Hvift af lette Lin
løsner styrtende Lavin,
er det nok til at begrave
Verden, naar den er aflave.

Men Det maa ei hviskes stille.
Sandheds Ven ei blot maa ville.
Vær i Et og Alt dig Selv!
Det er Sejrens Kunst, min Sjæl!
Som Stefanen mellem Stene
maa du staae, om selv alene.



CHRISTIANIA MANNSKOR

Christiania Mannskor, established in 2009, is Norway's professional men's choir. It is made up of 18 singers under the direction of conductor Marius Skjølaas. The ensemble has regular engagements in Oslo and countrywide and has performed at the invitation of, among others, the Norwegian government and parliament.

Christiania Mannskor is dedicated to the renewal and revitalisation of men's choir singing in Norway. *Like Father, Like Son* is the ensemble's fifth release on the LAWO Classics label. Previous releases are *Something New* (LWC1076, 2014), *Something Blue* (LWC1107, 2016), *Norge, mitt Norge* (LWC1121, 2017), together with the Royal Norwegian Air Force Band, and *Something Borrowed* (LWC1188, 2020).

MARIUS SKJØLAAS CONDUCTOR

Marius Skjølaas completed a degree in church music with a major in choral conducting at the Norwegian Academy of Music. He studied with Grete Pedersen, Jesper Grove Jørgensen (Copenhagen), Harald Herresthal and Kåre Nordstoga. Skjølaas serves as organist and Director of Music of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Oslo and is artistic director of the chamber choir Oslo Chorale Selskap.



SINGERS

Tenor 1:

Ørjan Bruskeland Hinna (*)
Paul Kirby (**)
Olav Leden Nytrøen
Jon Bjørnar Sandve (**)
Victor Strand (*)
Endre Aaberge Dahl (*)

Tenor 2:

Håkon Anvik (*)
Jonathan Steen Bjørnseth (*)
Jon Berg Eriksen (**)
Øystein Lysne (**)
Robert Skovly (**)
Svein Oskar Smogeli (*)
Mathis Manger Winther (**)

Bass 1:

Dagfinn Andersen (*)
Aksel Frisnes (**)
Christopher Michael Kelley (**)
Brynjar Onsjøien (soloist on tracks 1 and 17)
Bjørnar Nilsen Øksenvåg

Bass 2:

Trond Gudevold (*)
Aleksander Løe Myrling (**)
Olav Refvem (*)
Øyvind Schjøtt
Carl Einar Traaen (**)
Jacob Abel Tjeldberg (**)

* 2022 only

** 2023 only

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DAVID MONRAD
JOHANSEN (1888–1974)

01. Draumkvædet, op. 7 12:47

Tre mannskor, op. 10

02. I. Skjenkarsveinen 03:22

03. II. Ette' striden paa Rusarvollanne 05:55

04. III. Hjorten spelar 03:28

Tre mannskor, op. 17

05. I. Ættar-arv 02:49

06. II. Bånsull (Ein haustkvell) 04:50

07. III. En Fembøring under seil 03:02

Tre mannskor

til tekster av Ivar Aasen, op. 19

08. I. Dei gamle fjelli 04:11

09. II. Gamle Grendi 03:55

10. III. Gamle Norig 02:53

Tre skaldekvad, op. 27

11. I. Hett luet Olavs hjerte 01:22

12. II. Du undres hugmilde kvinde 04:05

13. III. Alle de høie fjell 02:47

JOHAN
KJØVANDAL (1919–1999)

14. Drikkevise 01:11

Pleiaderne ved Midnat, op. 25

15. I. Andante tranquillo 05:08

16. II. Talekor 01:07

17. III. Andante sostenuto 04:52

18. Efter tidens leilighed 03:03