

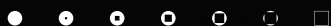
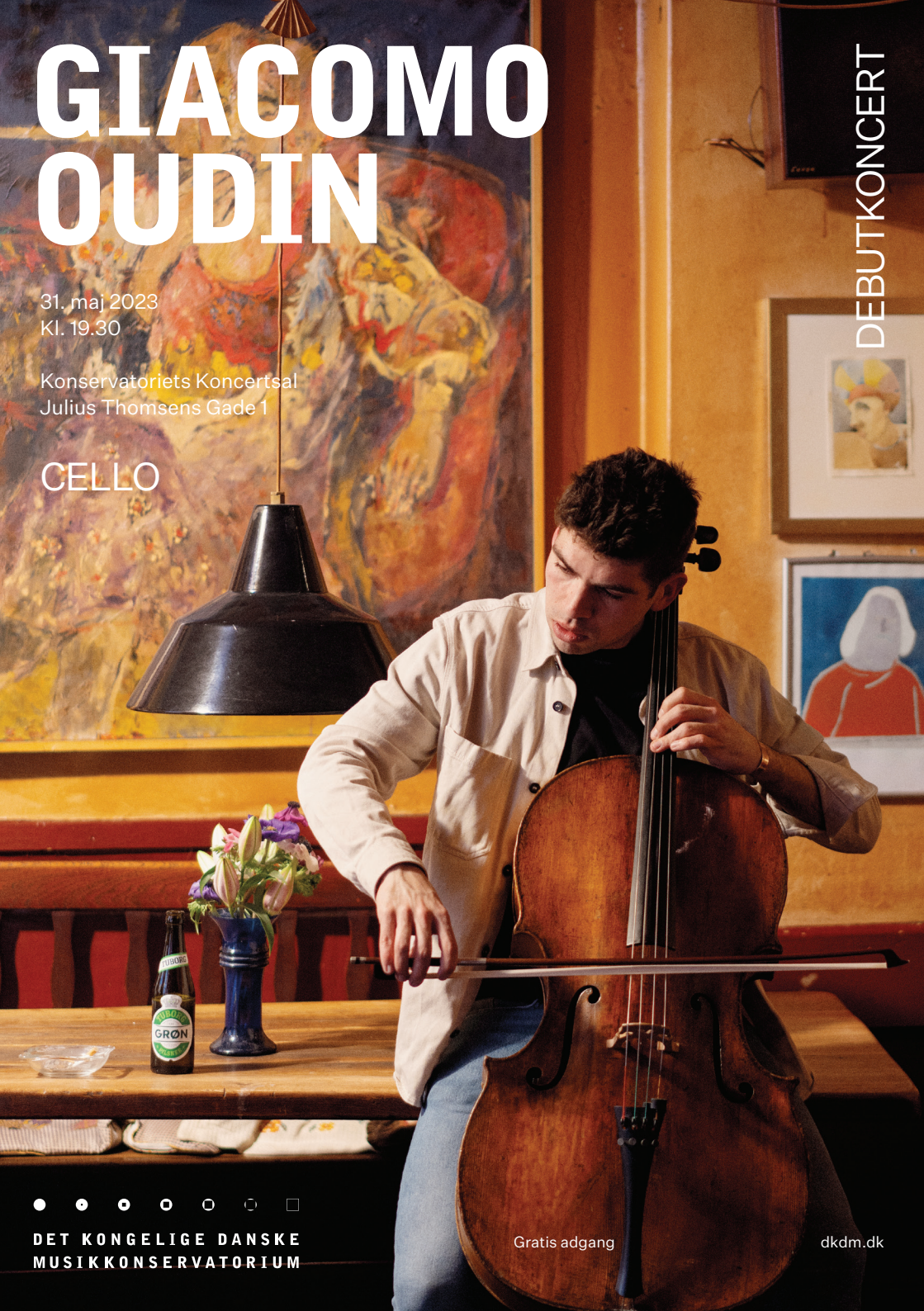
GIACOMO OUDIN

31. maj 2023
kl. 19.30

Konservatoriets Koncertsal
Julius Thomsens Gade 1

CELLO

DEBUTKONCERT



DET KONGELIGE DANSKE
MUSIKKONSERVATORIUM

Gratis adgang

dkdm.dk

DEAR AUDIENCE

I think that when one enters the soloist program in the academy, the first question that pops up is “what am I going to play on my ‘Debut?’” Then it’s a few years of constant reflection, of weighting the pros and cons, finding the balance between coherence and realistically doable, pieces that you love and pieces that makes you shine and yet keep you guys interested and entertained. For me, the first evidence was to share the stage with friends, and I’m extremely proud that I successfully done this, every single musician taking part in this concert, I’m lucky enough to call them friends. I then figured that I really wanted to have an unusual program, I had to offer pieces that are not so famous, not played over and over, I’m very glad to present a program with a different approach to the cello playing and to mine in particular. From an intimate string duo to overwhelming string sextet and bright extraverted cello and piano sonata, the concert ends on a beautiful, holistic, mystical experience of a concerto with string orchestra. It turned out that the program is divided in very eclectic composers, a male and a female alive composers, a french (of course) excentric and a tortured revolutionary Austrian, fighting between tradition and evolution.

It can be interesting to note that, and it’s not on purpose, all of the works tonight have a strong feeling of contrasts in between very opposite materials, the hard and soft of limestone & felt, the constant change between laughter and tears in Poulenc, where Schönberg depicts both sides of his transfigured night, the scary darkness against the calm and the beauty of a quiet cloudless night. Vasks’ Concerto is strongly inspired by life, death and rebirth down here or in outer space, outer life.

This Debut (which ironically means beginning in french), marks also the end of my studies after many, many, many years; fun little wink from chance that the whole program reflects on changes and metamorphosis for an evening being both the end and the starts of two very important chapters of my musical life.

Thank you so much for coming.

Yours,
Giacomo

There’s clearly not enough paper to do so but I still want to thank Morten Zeuthen so much, for all the help on and off the cello over the years, with the smiles and advice that he always very generously shares!

I want to thank Berit, for all the years of playing a billion notes, always with the best of moods! Thank you for accepting to play with me tonight even though it’s the busiest time of the year and that I made you learn a very demanding sonata, I’m still not fully convinced that Berit doesn’t have a secret twin.

Absalon, despite the growing fame and full agenda, thank you so much for joining me on stage, and rocking immensely! I say ‘senk you’!

Pascal, Hjörtur and the string orchestra thank you all so much for your time, energy and good vibes!

Big thanks to Sarah, the DKDM team and the tonemeisters for helping out so much for this event to go smoothly!

I want to thank Rasmus for giving me the idea for the Vasks (and the cello part).

I have to thank Mathilde for accepting to share her Birthday with my concert. (happy birthday by the way!)

In general I want to thank all my friends and family for constantly supporting me through fun and less fun times. Peter and Maria, thank you for coming all the way down here. I'm infinitely grateful to my parents, always there and helpful, thank you for braving the fear of flight and be there in the hall tonight. And last but not least, I want to thank Alva, first of all because she is probably playing as much as I am tonight, but especially for the constant help, love, fun and dedication that you give me, it's a full time and lifelong hobby.

There shall be many many more thanks that have probably been forgotten but that can be repaired, as I strongly recommend everyone to join for the post concert drinks in Sorte Firkant on Blågård's Plads where I'll be extremely happy to see as many of you as possible to exchange a drink, a chat and/or a hug!

Giacomo Oudin

MUSICIANS

Born in a musical family, **Giacomo Oudin** started playing the cello with his father. After studying in Paris, he moved to Copenhagen where he graduated from the masters degree of the Royal Academy of Music in Toke Møldrup's class and met very inspiring artists such as Tim Frederiksen, Fredrik Sjölin or Richard Krug. He then joined the Soloist class program under Morten Zeuthen's guidance. Giacomo got to perform with amazing artists such as Marianna Shirinyan, Mathias Kjøller or Malin Broman as well as receive lessons from the coolest band on earth, the Danish String Quartet! Giacomo is an active freelance musician and he has worked with the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Copenhagen Phil, as well as Camerata Nordica in Sweden. He wishes more to see Juventus win the Champion's League again than to ever play in Carnegie Hall.

The Icelandic cellist and conductor **Hjörtur Páll Eggertsson** has studied under the guidance of Gunnar Kvaran and Sigurgeir Agnarsson at the Reykjavík College of Music before moving to Copenhagen in 2017, where he continued his studies at the Royal Danish Academy of Music with Morten Zeuthen and Toke Møldrup. Alongside his cello studies in Copenhagen, Hjörtur began studying conducting in 2020, when he was admitted to the Malko Academy for Young Conductors. Since then he has participated in masterclasses given by Herbert Blomstedt, Fabio Luisi and Eva Ollikainen, as well as conducting concerts with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Athelas Sinfonietta and the DR Vokalensemble. He will be starting his conducting studies with Ed Spanjaard at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam in the fall of 2023.

Absalon String Quartet is a young Copenhagen-based ensemble formed in 2020. The quartet quickly gained recognition in Denmark after they won the Rued Langgaard Competition in 2021 and in that connection played at the opening concert of the Rued Langgaard Festival in Ribe the same year. During the summer of 2022, the up-and-coming quartet has given several concerts, e.g. at the Bornholm Music Festival and the Oslo Chamber Music Festival. ASQ has also taken part in several masterclasses, including David Harrington from the Kronos Quartet as part of the Festspillene in Bergen, and with the Danish String Quartet at the DSQ Academy. In January 2023 quartet won first prize at the prestigious Danish Radio Chamber Music Competition. The quartet works on a daily basis with Professor Tim Frederiksen at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen. ASQ consists of violinists Thera Ortved and Andreas Larsen, Alva Rasmussen on viola and Olga Chwaszczewska on cello.

PROGRAMME NOTES

Shaw: Limestone and felt, 2012

American composer Caroline Shaw is a musician who moves among roles, genres, and mediums, trying to imagine a world of sound that has never been heard before but has always existed. In 2013, she became the youngest person to ever receive the Pulitzer Prize in Music for her Partita for 8 voices at the age of 30. Shaw then received several Grammy awards, as a singer, violonist & composer as well as an honorary doctorate from Yale, and a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship. She has worked with a range of artists including Rosalía, Renée Fleming, Kanye West and Yo Yo Ma, and she has contributed music to films and tv series including the Saturday Night Live with Paul McCartney, Mozart in the jungle, Dark or Beyoncé's Homecoming.

As she writes about her piece: « Limestone & Felt presents two kinds of surfaces - essentially hard and soft. These are materials that can suggest place (a cathedral apse, or the inside of a wool hat), stature, function, and - for me - sound (reverberant or muted). In limestone & felt, the hocketing pizzicato and peeling motivic canons are part of a whimsical, mystical, generous world of sounds echoing and colliding in the imagined eaves of a gothic chapel. These are contrasted with the delicate, meticulous, and almost reverent placing of chords that, to our ears today, sound ancient and precious, like an antique jewel box. Ultimately, felt and limestone may represent two opposing ways we experience history and design our own present.»

Poulenc: Sonate pour violoncelle et piano, 1948

Francis Poulenc attributed his career to the gift of a toy piano when he was two years old. In his memoirs he recalled that it was “white lacquered and with cherries painted on it.” He was a figure full of contradictions: the critic Claude Rostand once described him as ‘half monk, half thug’. There was definitely more thug than monk at first. Yet this was a thug with a twinkle in his eye. “Lanvin suits but unpressed, scrubbed hands but the fingernails were bitten to the bone” Poulenc could write music that made you laugh one moment and cry the next, effortlessly manipulating mood and colour. His gift for melting melodies helps, but so does the sophistication of his harmonic language and his ear for seductive instrumentation.

It's through "les Six" paris-based group of composers created as the french opposition to the russian "mighty five" (group created in St-Petersburg by Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin and Mussorgsky) that he collaborated with Erik Satie and Jean Cocteau embracing the "dadaïsme", music-hall and burlesque influences all over Paris during the 30's . Written with the help of the legendary cellist Pierre Fournier, to whom the piece was dedicated and created by both of them in 1949, Poulenc's Sonate pour violoncelle et piano is a profusion of musical ideas. A critic once wrote about this sonata, « Mozart meets Stravinsky in a Paris cabaret. » The opening movement provides a variety of themes that are played between the cello and the piano, often in dialogue. A bright fanfare opens this movement leaving place to both lyrical, broad, march and animated sections, setting the tone for the whole piece. Next comes a tender Cavatine (slow, intimate aria in the italian opera) saturated with colorful harmonies where the cello shimmeringly sings out its melancholy. and a cheerful Ballabile ("danceable") brings back the fun, the effervescence of a friday night on the « grands Boulevards » jumping off a taxi, running from one musichall to the next fancy place to be seen. A dramatic Largo opens the finale followed by mysterious notes on the cello before Poulenc reintroduces moods from the previous three movements, with a virtuosic and frenetic duet between the instruments that seems to say "calm down, it was only a joke."

Schönberg: Verklärte Nacht, Op.4, 1899

While he was the leader of the musical revolution centered in Vienna in the early twentieth century, whose precepts led to completely new foundations for the composition of music, Arnold Schönberg certainly possessed nothing of the personal aura of a revolutionary. Born into a poor family of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and almost completely self-taught as a composer, he struggled most of his life to provide for his family as a teacher of music theory and composition. He was a quiet, intellectual, and somewhat dogmatic man, and certainly realized that, for all of his wide reputation and approval by eminent musicians, he could never hope to earn a living from compositions alone. Audience and critics' reactions to his challenging musical style saw to that. He limped along from one teaching engagement to another. The advent of the Third Reich put paid to his time in Vienna, and he had the perspicacity to move his family out very early on. In the late 1930s they ended up in southern California, where he taught first at the University of Southern California, and then at UCLA. Poor health dogged him for most of his life, and he retired on a very small pension, dying in 1951 in Los Angeles.

His youth and the period of his musical apprenticeship was thoroughly grounded in the chromatic harmony of Wagner and the structural integrity of Brahms - he adored them both. So, naturally, his early efforts in musical composition were absolutely an outgrowth of the late Romantic traditions of conventional Germanic art. Nevertheless, his innate sophistication led him to extend, push, and challenge these precepts. So, his early style is somewhat of a bridge between the lush conventions of late romantic music, and the stark upheavals of the next century. The first work that brought him recognition is, of course, Verklärte Nacht (Transfigured Night), composed for string sextet and later arranged by him for strin

The work, inspired by a poem by the controversial poet, Richard Dehmel, a good friend of Schönberg, lies in one continuous movement, although there are five somewhat

subtle, but perceptible, sections that correspond to the poem's five stanzas. Dehmel himself told Schönberg after the premiere: "I had intended to follow my text in your composition, But I soon forgot to do so, I was so enthralled by the music."

The dense spiderweb of melodic lines, in a harmonic scheme that pushes the limits of tonality, creates a dark mood so characteristic of fin-de-siècle Vienna.

The poem concerns a troubled couple walking in the gloom and dark, the woman confessing her pregnancy by another man, her shame at her transgression, and her fear of thereby destroying her relationship with her true love. The last stanza turns upbeat as her lover declares, no matter, the child will be ours. The sexual content was controversial enough, but coupled with the music's advanced harmonic idiom, it was sufficient to hinder the acceptance of what is clearly Schönberg's first masterpiece.

Verklärte Nacht, Richard Dehmel (translation by Mary Whittal)

Two people are walking through a bare,
cold wood;
the moon keeps pace with them and
draws their gaze.

The moon moves along above tall oak
trees,
there is no wisp of cloud to obscure the
radiance
to which the black, jagged tips reach up.
A woman's voice speaks:

"I am carrying a child, and not by you.
I am walking here with you in a state of
sin.
I have offended grievously against myself.
I despaired of happiness,
and yet I still felt a grievous longing
for life's fullness, for a mother's joys
and duties; and so I sinned,
and so I yielded, shuddering, my sex
to the embrace of a stranger,
and even thought myself blessed.
Now life has taken its revenge,
and I have met you, met you."

She walks on, stumbling.
She looks up; the moon keeps pace.
Her dark gaze drowns in light.
A man's voice speaks:

"Do not let the child you have conceived
be a burden on your soul.
Look, how brightly the universe shines!
Splendour falls on everything around,
you are voyaging with me on a cold sea,
but there is the glow of an inner warmth
from you in me, from me in you.
That warmth will transfigure the
stranger's child,
and you bear it me, begot by me.
You have transfused me with splendour,
you have made a child of me."

He puts an arm about her strong hips.
Their breath embraces in the air.
Two people walk on through the high,
bright night.

Vasks: Cello concerto No.2 "Klātbūtne", 2012

Pēteris Vasks is one of Latvia's most recognized composers; in 1997, his compatriot and friend, the latvian violinist Gidon Kremer, created Vasks first violin concerto "Distant Light" and contributed to Vasks' music to spread outside Latvia. Since, Vasks

has worked and received commissions from artists such as the Kronos quartet, David Geringas or Sol Gabetta.

During his creative life, he developed from a young, angry and avant-garde author who speaks the language of modernist music, into a remarkable artist who illustrates the eternal duel between good and evil with the so-called new principles of simplicity, as well as universally understandable sound expression.

Similar to Arvo Pärt or Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Vasks' music is very representative of the post-romantic minimalistic writing. The creative spirit of Pēteris Vasks speaks in a language of surmised lightness, ecstatic light, resigned peace, nervous excitement and blatant tragedy. A major source of inspiration for Vasks is nature, the birds, the forest, starry skies and the sea. His music stands as an opposition to the violence and repression that Latvia endured for most of the composer's life, Latvia being occupied through history by Poland, Sweden, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union until 1991.

Vasks composed "Klātbūtne", his second cello concerto for violoncello and string orchestra in 2012. The work follows Vasks' long line of programmatic titles in Latvian: Klātbūtne meaning 'Presence.' Vasks' explanation of the title is: "I am here. I am not distant. With every breath I am here in this world, with all my ideals and all my dreams of a better world." Vasks uses the cello, in this three-movement work, to convey his own view on life: "You arrive on this earth as a human being, you take your first steps in the world and then your life slowly develops." The atmosphere of the concerto presents the idea of "the soul ascending into the cosmos."

The second movement, Allegro marcato, is highly contrasting; the black against white. The majority of Vasks' multi-movement works contain a strong contrast between movements, with the composer often employing the formal structure of slow - fast - slow. This movement is quick and aggressive, and fuelled by "negative ideas," through harsh dissonant passages. Vasks, however, incorporates fragments, memories of the first slow movement into the chaos: "what do I want to achieve on this earth? In which direction should I take my life?" This contrasting movement contains tutti passages of irony and sarcasm, very similar to Shostakovich's writing.

The final movement, a slow Adagio, contains perhaps the most significant passage in the work, a lullaby that incorporates the human voice. As mentioned earlier, a recurring theme in Vasks' work is the tragedies of life and the conflict between nations and individuals. It is, however, present in this movement, serving as a key example, that Vasks' love, idealism and passion for life can always be heard in his slow movements filled with long lines giving almost a mystic aura to the finale. In this movement Vasks was "inspired to conjure up the idea of the soul returning to earth and starting a new life." He portrays this idea by "giving musical expression to this new beginning in life in the form of a lullaby." The work ends with this song, simple and unreal, it concludes the piece as an open question, is it the end ?

Where is the end, the loneliness expressed by the cello offers a paradox to the audience; the major chord of the orchestra tends towards a relief, but the solo cello is giving another meaning to this happy end. Like death in the Christian world, where Vasks has been raised, is it a relief to reach the afterlife, or is it a time of grief for the ones left behind.

Giacomo Oudin

PROGRAM

CAROLINE SHAW (F. 1982)

Limestone & Felt

FRANCIS POULENC (1899-1963)

Sonate pour violoncelle et Piano

Allegro: Tempo di marcia

Cavatine

Ballabile

Finale

ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG (1874-1951)

Verklärte Nacht op. 4

Sehr Langsam

Etwas breiter

Schwer betont

Sehr breit und langsam

Sehr ruhig

PAUSE (CA. 20 MINUTTER)

PETERIS VASKS (F. 1946)

Cellokoncert nr. 2 "Klātbūtne" (presence)

Cadenza - Andante cantabile

Allegro moderato

Adagio

MEDVIRKENDE

Alva Rasmussen, bratsch, Berit Johansen Tange, klaver,

Absalon String Quartet og Pascal Armini, bratsch

Orkester

Hjörtur Páll Eggertsson, dirigent

Christina Herresthal, sang

Alexander Chiu, Thera Brask Ortved, Andreas Lienhøft Larsen, Anne Skærbæk,

Martyna Kulpińska, Violetta Varo, Erik Danciu, Panagiotis Nikolakis, Bori Brezovszky,

Cassandra Andrea Juul, Gabriel Coxner, violin

Alva Rasmussen, Kinga Dauner, Mikkel Schreiber, bratsch

Theodor Lyngstad, Olga Chwaszczewska, Rasmus Støier Andersen, cello

Piotr Hetman, Morten Mandel, kontrabas
