

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black, ribbed, high-necked top, is captured in a dynamic conducting pose. She is looking upwards and to the right, with her mouth slightly open. Her right hand holds a white baton, and her left hand is extended outwards. The background is a blurred indoor setting with blue and grey tones.

# Breaking Waves

Swedish Wind Ensemble  
Cathrine Winnes

## Music

### Helena Munktell (1852–1919)

- 1 Bränningar, Symfonisk bild (Op. 19) – 10:18  
Breaking Waves, Symphonic Picture (Op. 19)

### Lili Boulanger (1893–1918)

Trois morceaux

- 2 1. Dun vieux jardin – 2:40
- 3 2. D'un jardin clair – 1:48
- 4 3. Cortège – 1:34

### Ethel Smyth (1858–1944)

- 5 On the Cliffs of Cornwall – 7:19  
Prelude to Act 2 of The Wreckers

### Ethel Smyth (1858–1944)

- 6 Overture to The Wreckers – 9:07

### Clara Schumann (1819–1896)

- 7 Ballade Op. 6, No. 2) – 6:57

### Elfrida Andrée (1841–1929)

- 8 Fritiofs färd på havet ur Fritiof Suite – 9:25  
Fritiof's Sea Journey from Fritiof Suite

### Lili Boulanger (1893–1918)

- 9 Dun matin de printemps – 4:58

### Lili Boulanger (1893–1918)

- 10 D'un soir triste – 9:30

All the works are arranged by Anders Högstedt.



## Classical music's universal suffrage

The year is 1921. The battle for universal suffrage is sweeping across Europe. In some countries, women have already secured the vote. Elsewhere, the fight continues – and lives are on the line. In Sweden, women are heading for the polls for the very first time. How are these events reflected in the history of music? The music on this recording gives a good impression of what was happening within European music at this time, in the lead up to – and during – Europe's great democratisation.

While the women of Europe were demanding their right to a political voice, the world of music was undergoing a transformation. Women were also claiming the right to be heard within music, to exercise their artistic influence in the public sphere, to release their creative urges, and to take on the world's biggest instrument: the orchestra.

Traditionally, the woman's place was in the home. Her main role was to care for her husband, their children and the house, but women from privileged homes might play the piano, or maybe even the violin, and beautiful singing voices were in great demand. In this way, the salons of the upper classes might be enhanced by a highly educated housewife, entertaining her guests with music and song. After all, as the father of Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn said to his daughter: "Music is likely to become Felix's profession. For you it can – and must – be only an ornament.

Could a woman's brain be sufficiently developed to compose a complicated string quartet, or for that matter an entire symphony? Some were not convinced. In her

book *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf paraphrases Samuel Johnson when describing the composer Germaine Tailleferre: *"Sir, a woman's composing is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all."*

Dr Johnson would surely have continued to feel surprised in the intervening years. Women were no longer confined to the relative safety of the musical salon, and were emerging onto the public stage. They were now becoming creators in their own right, at the very heart of the thrilling operatic and orchestral universe. Swedish women were given their voting rights in 1921, and at the same time women's role in the world of music underwent a transformation. This was the prelude to 'music's universal suffrage'.

## About the recording

The Swedish Wind Ensemble recorded these works in the same year that Sweden marked the centenary of women's voting rights. The recording took place at the Musikaliska concert hall in the heart of Stockholm. The Royal Swedish Academy of Music has convened here for a number of musical and historical events over the years, including the presentation of the first Nobel Prize in 1901. The venue also saw the first Swedish performance of Helena Munktel's work *Breaking Waves*, during the Academy's formal gathering. She, Elfrida Andrée and Clara Schumann were all members of the Academy. Today, Musikaliska is the home of the Swedish Wind Ensemble, and an important arena for acoustic music.





Foto Mats Bäcker

All the works were specially arranged for the Swedish Wind Ensemble by its permanent arranger, Anders Högstedt. The pieces were originally written for a symphony orchestra or piano. But is it appropriate to record music adapted for an ensemble, rather than performing it in its original format? The Swedish Wind Ensemble certainly believes so, with its tradition of bringing music closer to the people. Before the advent of the gramophone, it was wind bands and military musicians, with their flexibility and their ability to perform outdoors, that brought music out into the parks and pavilions. If you were lucky, you could hear them come marching down the street. From waltzes and operatic gems to medleys and perennial favourites; music was played wherever the people were, without them having to buy expensive tickets for theatres or concert halls.

Today, the Swedish Wind Ensemble continues the tradition of bringing live music closer to the people, and in the anniversary year of universal suffrage it felt natural to showcase compositions by both Swedish and international women. Ever since its 'Skip the Full Beard' initiative in 2010, the orchestra has developed, arranged and performed a number of works written by women. Then, the orchestra took the music scene by surprise with a programme featuring 50% female composers for an entire season – winning the Swedish Association of Women Composers' Gold Broom Award.

With this recording, we want to share some of our work over the years. In this way, we hope that wind ensembles will be able to perform the repertoire we have arranged, thereby giving even more audiences the opportunity to enjoy this music.

## CLARA WIECK SCHUMANN (1819–1896) BALLADE, from *Soirées musicales*, op. 6

A secret musical code between two illicit lovers? Clara Wieck and Robert Schumann were not yet a couple when Clara Wieck wrote her opus 6, *Soirées musicales*, between 1834 and 1836. He was nine years her senior, and was her father's student. She was a young – but great – piano star. The teenage Clara Wieck dazzled an international audience with her perfect piano technique and her unusually expressive playing. Since then, there has been speculation about whether her expressive playing style may have been linked to her otherwise confined childhood and youth. Her controlling father insisted on writing Clara's diary himself, and while her parents lived together, their broken-down marriage traumatised the young girl so much that she did not speak until she was over four years old. It was through music that this young woman spoke – on stage, but also in sheet music. Her music encapsulates the legend of the 'romantic artist' and speaks symbolically about emotions that words cannot convey.

At this time, Clara and Robert were in such close musical symbiosis that they almost composed each other's music. "Clara is the inspiration for all my finest piano works," wrote Robert in 1839 to his former teacher Heinrich Dorn. Robert's feelings were also expressed consciously in his score for *Quasi variazioni: Andantino de Clara Wieck*. The theme of the second movement of the sonata in F minor begins on a C and ends on an F. This falling fifth interval is a possible musical code between the pair.

*Ballade* is the final movement of *Soirées musicales* op. 6. After a two-bar introduction, the main melody begins with a falling fifth.

The movement is an original composition for piano. Arranger Anders Högstedt allows the woodwind to lead the way in the dramatic melody that forms *Ballade*'s A section. The mood of the music is sensitive and intense, but still restrained, with a touch of melancholy that often appears in Wieck's compositions. In the B section of the movement we encounter hidden depths. A chromatic theme bubbles away beneath the surface. It repeats itself down in the depths, a warning perpetuum mobile, as if Wieck wants to tell us that there is something other than just this beautiful melody in her mind.

Högstedt has given the bass clarinet this restless role. The instrumentation brings to mind Richard Wagner, who incorporated the bass clarinet into the operatic orchestra, often as a symbol of sadness or melancholy.

*Soirées musicales* was dedicated to the pianist and family friend Henriette Witt (1908–39). Wieck wrote her next work, piano concerto op. 7, for herself and this was the only piece she ever composed for an orchestra. Perhaps the time had not yet come for a woman – even one of her calibre – to position herself as the creator of the greatest musical format. Nevertheless, Wieck went on to influence music like few other women in the history of Western music:

*“Like the buds before the wings of colour are exploded into splendour, captivating and significant to view, like all things that contain the future within themselves.” (Robert Schumann writing about Soirées musicales in Neue Zeitschrift für Musik in 1837.)*





## ELFRIDA ANDRÉE (1841–1929) FRITIOF'S SEA JOURNEY, from Fritiof Suite

“But at a cathedral, that doesn't fit in at all. That's remarkable!” Composer Niels W. Gade gasped when he met Elfrida Andrée. She was the organist at Gothenburg Cathedral, and the first female cathedral organist in all of Europe.

Becoming Europe's first female cathedral organist was not easy for composer Elfrida Andrée, and when she heard that she had won the audition she fainted. She had undergone quite a struggle to reach this position.

Simply learning to play the organ had been a challenge. The young Elfrida Andréé from the town of Visby therefore passed her organ examination as an external candidate, and was the first woman in Sweden to do so.

She had no prospects of employment. A woman at the organ would lead to turmoil and distraction during services. And in his first letter to the Corinthians, St Paul himself had said "let your women keep silence in the churches." Andréé resolved there and then to rebel against St Paul.

Instead of waiting for a divine answer she decided to write a letter She wrote to the King in Council asking for the country's laws to be changed, and ten years later she sat at the organ stool in Gothenburg Cathedral. She would also teach a number of organists herself, encouraging women in particular to learn. She passed on the fruits of her pioneering efforts to the next generation, and made a real difference: Suddenly, all but two of the organists in the Gothenburg area were women. The churches were now full of distracting women, and they all played the organ.

Only one instrument was greater than the organ: the symphony orchestra. And just as with the church organ, her orchestral debut was not without friction. Andréé's Symphony No. 1 in C Major was performed in 1869 at the Hammar Theatre in Stockholm, and naturally the composer herself was present. But something didn't sound right, and it gradually dawned on her: The musicians were playing wrong notes on purpose! Eventually, she stood up mid-performance and walked out. Andréé stayed in bed for three days, while newspapers wrote about a deformed symphony and her anxious family suggested that she might like to stick to chamber music, and perhaps slightly lighter, shorter pieces.

However, she had her own motto: The elevation of the female species. This involved enhancing women's status and opportunities, and guided her work throughout her life.

Andrée continued to compose. She also conducted, taught and played at concerts and church services. And there soon came another symphony, and another – for organ and woodwind – and several more orchestral works, as well as a full-evening opera.

The opera was called Fritiofs Saga, with a libretto by the Swedish writer Selma Lagerlöf. With its Wagnerian influences and its late Romantic style, it was composed as a competition entry for the opening of Stockholm's new opera house in 1898. However, the only contemporary performance of the opera was by amateur musicians from Gothenburg. It then lay forgotten until the Gothenburg Opera and conductor Marit Strindlund woke the opera from its slumbers in 2019.

When Andrée was born, Swedish women had hardly any rights. By the time of her death in 1929, women had been able to vote since 1921. At that stage, Andrée was on leave from Gothenburg Cathedral, but she went there in the evenings anyway and played the organ late into the night. One night, she pulled out all the stops and the sound of the mighty organ thundered through the huge cathedral. As the final chord faded away, she called out: "That showed you, little St Paul!"

## HELENA MUNKTELL (1852–1919) BREAKING WAVES, Symphonic Picture op. 19

On a gloomy November day in 1919, the Swedish music scene converged on the Musikaliska concert hall at Nybrokajen 11, in the heart of Stockholm. As always, the Royal Swedish Academy of Music's traditional formal gathering was a prestigious event, with speeches, prize-giving ceremonies and music. The composer and academy member Helena Munktell had passed away earlier that same year. She was not the first woman to be elected to the academy, which admitted its first female members back in the 18th century. What was unusual was that she was elected solely on her merits as a composer.

Now, in the packed auditorium of the country's oldest concert hall, the audience waited to hear the Swedish premiere of Munktell's orchestral work *Breaking Waves*. This is a symphonic image in which waves swell, break, are forced into the air and fall back, only to return with renewed vigour or at other times, as a quiet ripple on the surface of the water. Her opus 19, performed in the year 1919.

The *Breaking Waves* composed by Grycksbo-born Helena Munktell in Monte Carlo in the 1890s came at a time when the waters of musical history were also in full swell. Tonality had reached a breaking point, and composers would soon have to start looking for something other than just major and minor keys in order to continue their work.

This was also a breaking point for female composers. With her orchestral works such as *Breaking Waves*, *Dala Suite* and her opera *In Florence*, Munktell paved the

way for women in her role as a composer. Munktel brought her music out from the salon and onto the public stage. *Breaking Waves* broke new ground!

She stretches the canvas of her symphonic image with a quivering B♭. From here, the movement spills over into the first, slightly abrupt sea motif, which immediately takes up residence in the orchestra, before moving around like a chameleon throughout the work. A Wagnerian aesthetic meets French instrumentation from the start, leading us straight into the more relaxed main theme.

This main theme presents itself with the horn section, a punctured rhythm, not unlike that of Richard Wagner's Ride of the Valkyries. The theme is brief and varies constantly, but always retains the same rhythmic structure.

As the movement then flows along, we encounter a second theme that really only consists of a small chromatic, descending figure. As kaleidoscopic as its sister theme, this figure also insists on behaving differently all the time. The use of motifs is reminiscent of Beethoven, as he too used very small components to build up large, coherent works.

Using these three building blocks, Munktel sketches the entire symphonic landscape in *Breaking Waves*. She herself never heard the work performed at home in Sweden. However, the Swedish Wind Ensemble has now recorded it in Högstedt's instrumentation – which is close to Munktel's own symphonic style – in the same auditorium where it made its Swedish debut back in 1919: Musikaliska.

## ETHEL SMYTH (1858–1944)

### From *THE WRECKERS*: Overture and *On the Cliffs of Cornwall*

British composer Ethel Smyth's opera *The Wreckers* premiered in Leipzig at the Neues Theatre on 11 November 1906. This is the best known of Smyth's six operas, with a libretto by Henry Brewster and Smyth herself.

The three-act work depicts a small harbour community where the locals dutifully attend church, but where the men also plunder ships coming in from the sea. The stage is set for conflict when it is discovered that someone has started warning the ships, and a drama of passion also plays out between two possible whistleblowers, both of whom are in love with one of their wives. The action reaches a tragic conclusion. The opera ends with the unfaithful young lovers chained to each other and trapped in a barren cave as the tide rises, until they finally face a watery death in each other's arms.

The Overture is packed with musical imagery. The sound of British sea shanties meets impressionistic series of whole tones. Wagnerian chromatic scales depict the seafoam splashing high into the air while sacred, heroic choales are replaced with dancing three-beat melodies that evolve into something more dangerous, before ending up with such gaudiose final chords that one would think the whole opera was over.

However, this is only the beginning. The prelude to Act 2, *On the Cliffs of Cornwall*, introduces a different side of Smyth. A transparent, almost exotic tone creates associations with French impressionistic instrumentation, only to shift towards

Russian influences. Here, Smyth demonstrates her broad tonal frame of reference, flirting unabashedly with the stylistic features of Rimsky-Korsakov's sea music in his masterpiece Scheherazade. Cymbals, triangles, oboes and the cor anglais come together in what might be described as a Turkish style, harking back to the Ottoman Empire where the sultan's own military orchestra – the janissary band – used these instruments as supporting elements.

Smyth's compositions were recognised with a damehood, but she was also known for her commitment to women's suffrage. The suffragettes' own anthem – The March of the Women – was composed by Smyth, and the melody also appears in the overture to her feminist opera *The Boatswain's Mate*.

But above all, Smyth comes across as a powerful musical personality who decided exactly how she wanted things to be. The events surrounding the premiere of *The Wreckers* are a good example of her steadfastness, her unwavering self-confidence and her unscrupulous disregard for contemporary norms and rules. Since the opera was due to be staged in Leipzig, Smyth was unable to attend the rehearsals. She arrived the day before the premiere, and was astonished to learn that large parts of the opera had been cut.

“Unacceptable!” thundered Smyth. “It is the only solution”, replied the conductor, since they had not rehearsed the omitted sections. The maestro was clear: The piece would be performed with cuts, or not at all. And thus it was to be. The Leipzig audience was thrilled, but Smyth herself was unimpressed. This was not how her opera was supposed to be performed! At night, while everyone else slept off the excitement of the premiere, she snuck into the orchestra pit. There,

she stole all the orchestral notes and the conductor's score. When the people of Leipzig woke the next morning, Smyth and The Wreckers had long since boarded a train to Prague. The Leipzig scandal, as it came to be known, meant that there were no more performances of The Wreckers at the Neues Theater that year.

## LILI BOULANGER (1893–1918) D'UN MATIN DE PRINTEMPS and D'UN SOIR TRISTE

In 1913, the name Marie-Juliette Olga 'Lili' Boulanger was on everyone's lips. A woman had won the Prix de Rome composition prize for the first time ever. The Parisian had barely turned 20, and was younger than all her competitors. Not only was she a woman, the score she had delivered – the cantata *Faust et Héléne* – was truly astonishing. A great compositional talent was thereby catapulted onto the European cultural scene, accompanied by a famous sister, Nadia Boulanger, who would also make her mark on musical history.

Lili's success was enormous. However, there were long, dark shadows in the background. The young composer was seriously ill, and had been for a long time. We now know that she suffered from Crohn's disease, and died at the age of just 24, leaving her beloved sister Nadia and depriving history of a great composer who would surely have gone on to write many more pieces and whose true potential will never be known. What would French music have been today if she had lived? And what would the history books have told us about women in music if Boulanger had achieved her full genius?

In 1917, it became clear that time was running out for Lili Boulanger. During the coming year, she composed *D'un matin de printemps*. The springlike freshness of this work is electrifying. Musical descriptions of nature's splendour are evoked by a young woman who sees spring emerging for the very last time. She wants nothing more than to be alive.

The two works *D'un matin de printemps* and *D'un soir triste* are as much like sisters as Lili and Nadia themselves. They are made up of the same DNA, a genome that starts by rising a minor third, returning to the main note, and then falling a major second. Both works exist in chamber versions, for duet, for trio and for orchestra. These versions differ from each other, and it could be suggested that Boulanger regarded them as parallel works with the same content, rather than having to be faithfully identical to each other. Högstedt has created his own version for wind instruments, where the trio versions form the foundation, but with significant inspiration from the orchestral versions.

The two sister works share a theme, but go their own separate ways. 1918's *D'un soir triste* begins as a kind of funeral march. Heavy archaic chords, consecutive fifths and fourths introduce the main theme of the clarinets in procession. Halfway through the movement, it suddenly falls quiet. In this pronounced pause, timpani, percussion and brass are introduced as in a military funeral. Is it the sound of World War I that we hear? Or perhaps Lili is simply composing for her own death. We are suddenly whirled into a feverish fantasy, with the harp and shimmering, heavenly tones. When Boulanger finally takes us back to the opening theme, most of the instrumentation has been stripped away. All that remains is the archaic consecutive fifths and fourths of the opening, the skin and bones of the music.

What follows now, we have already heard before. Just like the end of Verdi's *La Traviata*, where the main character Violetta lays dying. Immediately before the curtain falls, she is overcome by renewed vigour and sings passionately to her beloved: "I feel I am coming back to life! Oh, joy!" Then she dies in his arms. In the same way, *D'un soir triste* rises with a final cry, full of power before the life ebbs out of the work and a supernatural sound lingers in a timeless, relaxed universe. Not major, not minor, but just like the ending to Mozart's requiem: with an open fifth, for the way ahead remains a mystery.

*Trois morceaux* was written in 1914 during Boulanger's time at the Villa Medici, a stay that was part of the Prix de Rome prize she had won there before. Here, we encounter a more impressionistic Boulanger, where the relationship with the older composer Claude Debussy becomes apparent.

Högstedt gives the piano work an airy orchestration and a transparent, contemporary tonal treatment, once again confirming his mastery of instrumentation for woodwind.



## Swedish Wind Ensemble

Swedish Wind Ensemble is the largest professional civilian wind ensemble in Sweden and has its residence in Stockholm's most ancient concert hall, Musikaliska, built in 1878. Swedish Wind Ensemble has developed, from a brass sextet, founded in 1906, to a modern, bold and innovative ensemble. The orchestra excels in an extensive repertoire reaching over many genres ranging from contemporary music to late romanticism, Argentinian tango, folk music, cross-over and jazz, often in collaboration with soloists from these different genres.

Over the past ten years, the orchestra has actively been striving for a more equal repertoire and greater gender awareness, leading to new musical discoveries, works and transcriptions of older music by composers such as Helena Munktel, Elfrida Andrée, Valborg Aulin and Lili Boulanger.

Swedish Wind Ensemble has performed works by contemporary Swedish composers such as Andrea Tarrodi, Benjamin Staern, Christian Lindberg, Anders Hillborg, Ann-Sofi Söderqvist, Molly Kien and Britta Byström. Recordings include composer portraits by Mikael Råberg, Martin Q Larsson and Igor Stravinsky's Work for winds, the later conducted by Cathrine Winnes. A series of records have also been released with international soloists conducted by Christian Lindberg. Cathrine Winnes is the orchestra's artistic director and principal conductor since 2015.







**The Norwegian conductor Cathrine Winnes** has worked with all the symphony orchestras of Sweden and Norway. In addition to her regular work with the standard symphonic repertoire, she has been praised for her brave and unusual programming – including both rarely performed music of the romantic era and forgotten jewels of the 20th century. She has also premiered several contemporary works.

Winnes is since 2015 chief conductor and artistic leader of the Swedish Wind. Together they have recorded all of Stravinsky's music for winds (Nilento, 2017) with Peter Jablonski as piano soloist.



Over the years, Cathrine Winnes has worked with the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, the Norwegian Radio Orchestra, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Odense Symphony Orchestra in Denmark, the Finnish Tampere Philharmonic and the philharmonic orchestras of Johannesburg and Durban. In opera she has conducted at the Royal Swedish Opera, the Estonian National Opera, the Gothenburg Opera, the Norwegian National Opera and Ballet, the Royal Danish Theatre and Malmö Opera.

Furthermore, she has been widely recognized as a broadcaster in the dual capacity of both conductor and TV presenter. "She Composes Like a Man" is the title of Winnes' ground breaking TV-series in four episodes and a filmed concert, with Winnes conducting the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. The TV show deals

with hidden orchestral music and the women that composed it broadcasted in Scandinavia. In addition to hosting the show Winnes has contributed in developing the idea and manuscript. Cathrine Winnes holds a diploma degree in conducting from the Norwegian Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music in Stockholm.

**Anders Högstedt** has studied at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm and has also studied in Paris on an international scholarship from the Royal Swedish Academy of Music. He frequently works for musical institutions as an arranger and adapter, primarily of classical music. Anders is also involved in the Royal College of Music's ongoing 'Living musical heritage' project, which aims to bring Swedes' hidden musical treasures to a wider audience. Since 1996, Anders has been an arranger for Swedish Wind Ensemble.



## Musicians

**Flute:** Cecilie Hesselberg Løken, Per-Markus Heggstad (doubling piccolo)

**Oboe:** Charlotta Nässén, Eva-Karin Axelsson Hellander (doubling English horn)

**Clarinet:** Johan Söderlund (concertmaster),

Lotta Pettersson van den Poel, Carolina Anterot, Maria Rubio, Max Ljung

**Bass clarinet:** Lena Haag

**Bassoon:** Peter Gullqvist, Staffan Eriksson (doubling contra bassoon)

**Saxophone:** Ulf Tilly (soprano and alto), Martin Eriksson (tenor)

**French Horn:** Staffan Lundén-Welden, Andreas Lundmark

**Trumpet:** Martin Lood (doubling cornet), Jonas Lindeborg,

Annika Welander (doubling grand piano horn), Nicke Karlsson

**Trombone:** Åke Lännerholm (doubling euphonium), Mats Agnelid

**Bass trombone:** Magnus Olsson

**Tuba:** Eric Jakobsson

**Double Bass:** Josef Karnebäck

**Percussion:** Lauri Metsvahi (doubling timpani), Birger Thorelli

**Harp:** Stina Hellberg Agback

**Recording producer:** Lars Nilsson

**Assistant producer:** Anders Högstedt

**Text:** Cathrine Winnes

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Musikaliska