

calm like a bomb (2000), 10'

Violin & electronics

We often hear that in the aftermath of an explosion or a similar extreme shock, there reigns a strange silence: a sort of inner, timeless silence that drowns out the outer tumult. The title "calm like a bomb" calls to mind that type of contradictory phenomenon. And in the sensual central part of this work time does indeed seem to stand still. Jesper Nordin borrowed the title from a track by the group "Rage against the machine". It was written for violin and tape, the tape part consisting of arrangements of improvisations and variations on a lullaby. Here, Nordin has edited material from the folk/rock musician Fredrik Lindqvist, violinist Daniel Frankel and the folk singer Sofia Karlsson, whose voice and vocal technique play an important role in defining the character of the music. As the music passes into the final section, it does so through the emergence of a kind of tick-tock, mechanical music, and with this slightly limping march of alternating meters and accents, calm like a bomb ends in something reminiscent of a more "urban" sound milieu. For Nordin himself, "calm like a bomb" was a seminal work on the route towards an individual idiom. The piece has been played at a number of international festivals and has been awarded several prizes.

/Tony Lundman

English translation: Neil Betteridge

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Jesper Nordin (b. 1971)

Jesper Nordin is a leading Swedish composer who has garnered considerable international acclaim in recent years. His music, with its powerful emotional impact and traces of traditional Swedish folk music, rock music and improvised music, is broadcast and performed throughout the world.

His music is performed by conductors like Esa-Pekka Salonen, Daniel Harding and Kent Nagano and soloists like Martin Fröst, Diego Tosi and Jean Geoffroy. His orchestral pieces have been played and/or commissioned by orchestras as the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonieorchester Basel, Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, St Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Swedish and Finnish radio orchestras. In 2014 the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra highlighted the music of Jesper Nordin during a four day portrait festival. He was composer-in-residence for Swedish Radio's serious music station (P2) between 2004 and 2006.

He is also included in the repertoires of several of the world's foremost contemporary music ensembles, amongst them ensemble recherche, L'itineraire and Quatuor Diotima. He has received commissions from major institutions in Europe, including IRCAM, Radio France, Le Fresnoy, the French Ministry of Culture as well as several Art Councils and radio stations in Europe and North America. His music has been performed at numerous festivals, including Verbier Festival, ManiFeste, Wittener Tage für Neue Kammermusik, ISCM, Musiques en Scène, and Huddersfield. In 2010 he received the Grand Christ Johnson Prize for being "a sound magician, who explores and expands the acoustic space with originality and an uncompromising curiosity" (Royal Swedish Academy of Music).

Nordin studied at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm with Pär Lindgren, Bent Sørensen and William Brunson, before taking further studies at IRCAM with Philippe Leroux and others. He subsequently was invited to be a Visiting Scholar at Stanford University, where he studied with Brian Ferneyhough and worked in the CCRMA studio.

Jesper Nordin has also had huge success with his iOS apps Gestruent and ScaleGen that are based on his own composition technique.

For more info see www.jespernordin.com and www.gestruent.com