

Andreas Borregaard, accordion

Thursday 30th October 2025, 12.45pm

Cowdray Hall, Aberdeen

Programme

William Byrd	<i>Galliard to the First Pavane</i>
Maja S. K. Ratkje	<i>I cannot heave my heart into my mouth (Cordelia's Lament)</i>
Philip Venables / Ted Huffman	<i>My Favourite Piece is the Goldberg Variations</i>

Programme notes

William Byrd *Galliard to the First Pavane* (7')

The ancient sounds of Byrd's compositions transport us into the wordless interaction of dancing at the royal courts of the renaissance. Pavanés and Gaillards were popular at the time, but seem now forgotten. Played today the music opens a pathway 400 years back in time allowing us to sense an echo of the past.

Maja S. K. Ratkje *I cannot heave my heart into my mouth (Cordelia's Lament)* (2024) (11')

This solo piece is an uttering for sincerity and love, using a textual fragments from Shakespeare's King Lear – in the mouth of Cordelia.

Philip Venables/Ted Huffman *My Favourite Piece is the Goldberg Variations* (2021) (23')

My favourite piece is the Goldberg Variations is based on interviews with Susanne Borregaard (mother of accordionist Andreas Borregaard) conducted during the summer lockdown of 2020.

Andreas approached me about writing a piece involving extended performativity beyond simply playing the accordion. I was drawn to the idea of the accordionist as storyteller, almost in the troubadour sense. We met with writer Ted Huffman in Berlin to speak about Andreas' own life and work, which in turn led to interviews with his mother over Skype.

My work with Ted often uses verbatim text and this piece continues our exploration of queer histories. From this interview material, we formed twelve snapshots of a life over seven decades.

The piece is dedicated to Susanne Borregaard with great appreciation for her contribution.

Philip Venables

Biographies

Through an extensive career as soloist and chamber musician, **Andreas Borregaard** communicates the accordion's fascinating qualities and palette of expressions to a wide audience. Collaborating with composers from all over Europe, he is actively influencing the development of this young instrument's use and repertoire - and pushing the boundaries of the performer's involvement on stage. Through a parallel fascination with early music, he explores how the accordion can add new colours to the keyboard repertoire of the 18th century.

In 2013 Andreas Borregaard was awarded with the Danish Arts Council's "Young Elite"-scholarship aimed to support the country's most significant talents across all musical genres, and in 2017 the Danish Composers' Society awarded him their "Music Prize" in recognition of his work.

Andreas Borregaard started playing the accordion at the age of 5 in his hometown of Allerød, Denmark. In 2001 he began his studies at The Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen with professor James Crabb. After 5 years of study he graduated with Bachelor and Master degrees, obtaining the highest possible marks in all subjects. He was then immediately admitted into the Soloist Class (advanced performance degree), graduating with an official debut concert in spring 2010.

However, Andreas Borregaard already made his international solo debut in 2007 with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales performing the UK-premiere of Giya Kancheli's "Kapote" for accordion and orchestra. In 2012 he premiered Fredrik Österling's (SE) theatrical concerto 'Endymion' (2012), in 2017 the cross-disciplinary 'Aeolian' (2017) by Maja S. K. Ratkje (NO)/Kathy Hinde (UK) and in 2020 'BOX' a new concerto by Hugi Gudmundsson (ISL) for accordion and barrel organ. 2021 included the new concerto PERSONHOOD by Jennifer Walshe (IE), and 2022 a double concerto (accordion and viola) by Nicolai Worsaae (DK)

Andreas Borregaard taught accordion and chamber music at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen from 2010 to 2022, and from 2017 to 2023 at the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo, where he also obtained his PhD in artistic research („Just Do It! - exploring the musician’s use of bodily performance“ (2023)). In October 2022, Andreas Borregaard was appointed professor at the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover.

Multi award-winning Norwegian composer **Maja Solveig Kjelstrup Ratkje’s** music is performed worldwide by performers such as Ensemble Intercontemporain, Klangforum Wien, Oslo Sinfonietta, The Norwegian Radio Orchestra and many more. She is also active as a singer/voice user and electronics performer and engineer, as a soloist or in groups such as SPUNK and Avant Joik. She has been soloist with numerous orchestras internationally, and has performed her own music for films, dance and theatre, installations, and numerous other projects. Visual art or text material is often a part of her own work, in installations or staged works. She has made large gallery works with SPUNK, she has made music for a radio play by Elfriede Jelinek, and in 2003, she played a part in her own opera, based on the texts from the Nag Hammadi Library. www.ratkje.com

The work of **Philip Venables** — “*a composer of ferocious dramatic instincts*” (New Yorker) — is all about storytelling. His previous stage works, *4.48 Psychosis*, *Denis & Katya*, *The Faggots and their Friends Between Revolutions* and *We Are The Lucky Ones* have been performed by leading companies across Europe, the UK and the USA, and received the Fedora Prize, an RPS Award, and an Ivor Novello Award, and shortlisted nominations for the Olivier Awards and South Bank Awards. He is described as “*one of the finest composers around*” (Guardian) and “*pushing the boundaries of opera*” (New York Times) and his work as “*a new brand of opera*” (The Times) and “*music of forensic clarity and visceral force*” (BBC Music Magazine). www.philipvenables.com

Ted Huffman is one of the most in-demand opera directors and librettists of his generation, known for his bold, contemporary vision and powerful storytelling. His work has earned critical acclaim and major awards across leading opera houses and festivals in Europe and the U.S. Notable recent accolades include nominations at the 2022 International Opera Awards for Best Production (*L’incoronazione di Poppea*, Festival Aix-en-Provence) and Best World Premiere (*The Time of Our Singing*, La Monnaie). His staging of *The Girl with the Pearl Earring* (Stefan Wirth) for Opernhaus Zürich won Opernwelt’s Best World Premiere of 2022.

His longstanding partnership with Venables has yielded several groundbreaking works. *The Faggots and Their Friends Between Revolutions*, based on Larry

Mitchell's cult novel, premiered at Manchester International Festival and toured to the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Bregenz Festival, NYU Skirball, Southbank Centre, Ruhrtriennale, and the Holland Festival, earning widespread praise as "irresistibly compelling" (The Guardian).

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