



CRANE REFLECTS ON A FAVOR

an eco-opera

KRISTIN NORDERVAL (NORWAY/US)

World Premiere

VoxLAB VårFEST 2023 - International Festival of New Works for Voice

Main stage, Oslo National Academy of the Arts, Norway, 02.09.2023

Performed on the site of the former Christiania Sailcloth Factory, “Crane Reflects on a Favor” is Part Two of the operatic diptych “The Sailmaker’s Wife”. The diptych is loosely based on the Japanese folktale “Tsuru no Ongaeshi” (Crane’s return of a favor) about a crane who pulls feathers from her body to weave a sail that sustains and enriches the person she is indebted to. Offering her body to create the fabric, she is eventually driven to depletion by human greed and hubris.

“Crane Reflects on a Favor” is a post-operatic allegory; a dream-like sonic performance installation, sung in three parts by three women, each representing one of the stages of the crane’s response to her offering: first as a gift given freely, then in response to pleading, and finally after demands of ownership.

Reflecting on our current relationship to our earth-mother’s body, this story offers a powerful metaphor. Cranes are over 10 million years old. They are descendants of the dinosaurs whose bones are the fossils in the fossil fuels we extract for wealth and power. That power, however, is simultaneously creating our own demise by destroying the body that sustains us. “Crane Reflects on a Favor” creates a sonic space to collectively mourn this almost inconceivable existential state.

The performer-controlled interactive vocal processing interface used in this work was developed through a Ph.D. Research Fellowship at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts/Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo, Academy of Opera. This performance marks the final presentation of that artistic research.

“Crane Reflects on a Favor” is produced in collaboration with Kristin Norderval (KHiO), LOOS Foundation (Den Haag), and VoxLAB. Funded by Norsk Komponistforening, Komponistenes Vederlagsfond, Det norske komponistfond, Oslo National Academy of the Arts (Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo), Kulturdirektoratet.



Concept and text: Kristin Norderval (US/NO)
Music: Kristin Norderval, developed with the ensemble
Director: Jill Sigman (US)
Lighting: Kaja Lund (NO)
Sound design: Kristin Norderval (US/NO)
Sound engineer: Cato Langnes (NO)
Costume design: Jill Sigman (US), Lydia May Hann (UK/NO)
Costume construction: Lydia May Hann (UK/NO)
Long string instruments construction: Jon Halvor Bjørnseth (NO)
Production assistants: Maria Caliniuc (RO), Gabriela Caliniuc (RO)
Producer/stage manager: Claudia Lucacel (NO/GR/RO)

CAST:

The Crane:

Rosanna Vibe (NO), Live backstrap weaving
Flora Ångman (SE/NO), Soprano
Viktoria Nikolova (BG/NL), Soprano
Kristin Norderval (US/NO), Soprano

The Sailmaker:

Viktor Bomstad (NO), Electric Guitar
Miguel Frasconi (US), Glass instruments & modular synth
Peter Van Bergen (NL), Contrabass clarinet
Rob Waring (US/NO), Percussion

The Narrator:

Viktor Bomstad (NO)
Jill Sigman (US)
Claudia Lucacel (NO/GR/RO)

MEET THE ARTISTS



Kristin Norderval

As both a composer and singer, Kristin Norderval is inspired by hybridity, interactivity and the idea that everything we do is site-specific. In her operas, chamber works, sound installations, and music for dance and theater she blends acoustic and electronic sound, de-tuned instruments, voices, machines, and the acoustic resonance of space. In her solo works she processes her voice in real time often combining it with prerecorded sounds to create complex sonic layers and unusual soundscapes. Custom controllers allow her to manipulate the processed sound with physical gestures. Her work with Pauline Oliveros over three decades was a primary influence in combining structural rigor with improvisation. Having trained in both composition and classical voice, Kristin first earned her living as a soprano soloist with a focus on contemporary music, particularly American composers from the New York School. She performed and recorded works by and often alongside composers such as Philip Glass, John Cage, Pauline Oliveros, Steve Reich, Annea Lockwood, David Lang, Tania Leon, Anne Le Baron, Frances White, Christian Wolff, Carla Lucero, George Crumb and many others. Returning to composition after her 40th birthday, Norderval's compositions have received international acclaim. Her solo CD *Aural Histories* was listed by The New Yorker music critic Alex Ross as one of "Ten Notable Classical Music Recordings of 2012". Her opera *The Trials of Patricia Isasa* (2016) won Quebec's OPUS prize in two categories: best contemporary music and best production. Kristin Norderval is currently a PhD Research Fellow at the Academy of Opera in Oslo.



Jill Sigman

Jill Sigman is a New York-based interdisciplinary artist, choreographer, and activist. She has been making dances and installations since the early 1990s, and in 1998 she founded jill sigman/thinkdance to think about pressing social issues through the body. In 2016, Sigman developed Body Politic, a program of workshops and laboratories that ask political questions somatically. Her work, incorporating cast-offs such as “garbage” and “weeds”, often addresses environmental themes. She has been collaborating with composer Kristin Norderval since 2003.



Lydia May Hann

Lydia is a Scottish costume maker with a particular interest in knitwear and sustainable costume practices. She has completed a Masters in Design at Oslo National Academy of the Arts centering the costume as the protagonist in performance making and the skin as material.



Kaja Glenne Lund

Kaja Glenne Lund is a lighting designer for theatre and stage productions, as well as architecture. She is working with galleries and exhibitions at KhiO, as well as being freelance. In 2023 she finished her master in architectural lighting design in Copenhagen and is now looking forward to expand the boundaries.



Jon Halvor Bjørnseth

Jon Halvor Bjørnseth (b. 1964) has composed for bands, theater, dance and multi-media for several years and is also an experienced leader of music workshops. In 1998 he founded the DRIVHUSET foundation of music workshops which has carried out some hundred projects all focusing on musical

creativity in improvising and composing. From a starting point with guitar and keyboards he nowadays plays more on several rare self-constructed string and percussion instruments. His use of computers has also shifted from being mainly a tool for composing and recording to being a live instrument in which one samples and manipulates the sounds on the fly. As part of the duo Båndvidda with Isak Anderssen, Jon Halvor has also completed a series of sound installations in which the audience can trigger sounds or participate actively in different ways.



Rosanna Vibe

Rosanna Vibe (b.1990) is a textile artist focused on hand weaving and dyeing, based in Oslo, Norway. She has an MFA from both the Oslo National Academy of the Arts and Tokyo University of the Arts. Alongside woven work, she builds performative weaving constructions that aim to emphasize the

tensions in the dialogue between body, tools and materials. This approach is based on ideas of weaving as a form of organic growth, and the textile as a life-sustaining extension and evolution of the body.



Flora Ångman

Flora Crocker Ångman is a Swedish soprano who completed her Master's in opera at the Oslo Academy of the Arts in 2022. There she debuted with the role of Matilde (Elisabetta Regina D'inghilterra, Rossini). She has since graduating won Opera Østfolds competition of childrens opera "Sotis og Stripen" which will be performed during the fall of 2023.



Viktoria Nikolova

Viktoria Nikolova is a singer, performer and creator from Sofia, Bulgaria, currently based in the Netherlands. She obtained a Master's in classical singing at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague in 2017. During that time, she specialised in Bulgarian folklore singing as an artistic researcher. She collaborates with various composers and ensembles in the Netherlands and abroad, often crossing between the fields of folklore and classical music. She is currently pursuing a degree in cultural sciences at Leiden University where, she is a co-president of Kunstgang Commission gallery space. In 2019 at Grachten-festival, Viktoria's author performance, "Metamorphosis of a Female Character," was awarded the Themaprijs and Oorkaanprijs. Between 2018 - 2022 Viktoria took part in the Opera Forward Festival, Westben Online Residency, and Plop Festival, among others. She was part of the internship program NKK NXT 19/20. Since 2020 she has been developing author and collective projects with artists and musicians in multi-disciplinary environments. Her work overlaps topics of, mediation in artistic processes and seeks liminality between digital and physical spaces interwoven with body and vocal improvisation. The main themes of her current artistic research are identity, transnationalism on the Balkans.



Peter Van Bergen

Dr. Peter J.A. van Bergen – Ph.D. Doctor of Arts The Netherlands. Composer, Improviser, Interpreter of contemporary composed music, Multi-instrumentalist in new concepts of interdisciplinary music (reedinstruments, live electronics, computer). Fields of artistic interests; Improvisation, composition, instability, artistic transformations. Founder/Director of the LOOS Foundation (since 1982), Founder/Director of Studio LOOS (since 2004) www.loosdenhaag.com As an improviser Van Bergen gave innumerable concerts, solo and with musicians like Cecil Taylor, Derek Bailey, Evan Parker, Anthony Braxton, William Parker, Misha Mengelberg.



Miguel Frasconi

Miguel Frasconi is a composer and improviser whose instrumentarium includes glass objects, analog electronics, and instruments of his own design. His glass instruments are struck, blown, stroked, smashed and otherwise coaxed into vibration, while his unique approach to modular synthesis takes a similar approach in the sonic

domain. He has composed numerous operas, chamber works, dance scores and performs in New York based ensembles, including the acoustic ensemble NewBorn Trio and the electric band Lampshade. Miguel's upcoming events include a performance at the Electric Eclectics Festival in Canada, a residency at Art OMI New York, and performances in Norway. Miguel has worked closely with composers John Cage, Morton Subotnick, Pauline Oliveros, James Tenney, Joan La Barbara, and Jon Hassell. His music has been released on New Albion, Porter, Clang, and independently through his own Bandcamp page, [frasconimusic](https://frasconimusic.bandcamp.com).



Rod Waring

Rob Waring has been a central figure in Norway's music scene since he moved to Oslo from New York in 1981. Combining the roles of percussionist, vibraphonist, composer and educator, his work spans a broad spectrum of musical approaches and styles. Rob has composed numerous commissioned works for soloists, chamber ensembles, jazz groups, percussion ensembles and choirs. He is Associate Professor at the Norwegian Academy of Music where he teaches classical percussion and jazz vibraphone.



Viktor Bomstad

Viktor Bomstad is a guitarist and joiker from Storfjord in Northern Troms. He has been seen in a number of different constellations in recent years and has recently had great success with the band Sex Magick Wizards, who have released a record on legendary Rune Grammofon and toured Germany. Viktor is a searching and curious musician who often plays in the landscape between beautiful and noisy. He can be seen in his own and others' projects in everything from children's shows to dirty rock clubs. In December 2022, Viktor will release his first solo album on Nice Things Records.



Claudia Lucacel

Claudia Lucacel is a producer, filmmaker / photographer, and performance artist. She is originally from Romania, grew up in Greece, and has lived in Norway since 2014. She has worked on a variety of cultural projects in different roles, e.g. as a producer, stage manager, director, actor and theater instructor, in Greece, USA, UK, and Norway. Claudia is a board member and executive director at VoxLAB and has organized VårFEST since 2019. In addition to a background in production work, Claudia does film and photography with a focus on stage art and documentary. Claudia is passionate about creating inspiring cultural experiences with a focus on interdisciplinarity.







Critics:

"We hear for a long time the echo of this trio movement out in the hall after the singers leave the room singing and the piece slowly comes to an end. An echo that gives a promise, and hope, that this is not the last time we hear from this crane."

Guro von Germeten, scenekust.no

For more information and bookings contact:

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