



KARI KRIIKKU

Clarinet

“..a physically flamboyant player of Olympian virtuosity...”

The New York Times

“Afterward, there was a surprised buzz in the auditorium as listeners confessed to loving a sometimes furiously dissonant piece” [NY Philharmonic/Alan Gilbert/Carnegie Hall/Magnus Lindberg concerto]. As reported

in the New Yorker it is not an uncommon occurrence for this consummate artist to bring his audience to its feet, even if the repertoire, or Kriikku himself, is being heard for the first time.

A champion of contemporary music Kari Kriikku has more recently looked to an intimate sized ensemble for new additions to his repertoire. With Quattour Diotima he premiered Kaija Saariaho's *“Figura”* at the 2016 Venice Biennale festival and 2017 Présence Festival, Paris. In 2017/18 he brings Michel van der Aa's *“Hysterisis”* to Swedish Chamber Orchestra conducted by Tung-Chieh Chuang. Written for small ensemble and electronics he gave the premieres of this work with the Lapland Chamber Orchestra and John Storgårds and Amsterdam Sinfonietta in Amsterdam's Concertgebouw Hall, later recording the work.

2017/18 season will also see Kriikku with MDR Sinfonieorchester (Leipzig), Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Slovenia Philharmonic of Ljubljana, Loepolinum Orchestra of Wroclaw's National Forum of Music, Tampere Philharmonic and further afield Singapore Symphony. He will work under the batons of Kazuki Yamada, John Storgårds, Joseph Swensen, Clemens Schuldt, Olari Elts amongst others.

Highlights of other new works Kriikku has premiered include Unsuk Chin's clarinet concerto (2014) with Gothenburg Orchestra and Kent Nagano. Performances continued with New York Philharmonic and Alan Gilbert for the US premiere, WDR Sinfonieorchester, Orquesta Sinfonica de Barcelona and London's Philharmonia Orchestra with Nicholas Collon. He has performed it under the baton of Ilan Volkov both with Glasgow's BBC Scottish Symphony and Malmö Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Jukka-Pekka Saraste, and in Amsterdam's Concertgebouw with Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Xian Zhang.

Kaija Saariaho's *“D'OM LE VRAI SENS”* received its' premiere with Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Sakari Oramo, and he most recently performed the work with New York Philharmonic and Esa-Pekka Salonen, and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Susanna Mälki. Other highlights include performances of Kimmo Hakola's colourful concerto with Semyon Bychkov (WDR Köln and La Scala, Milan), and Magnus Lindberg's concerto with a spectacular premiere at London's 2007 BBC Proms with BBC Symphony and Bychkov. Kriikku has recorded all these works for Ondine including Jukka Tiensuu's *“Missa”* with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and John Storgårds. Lindberg's Clarinet Concerto recording was nominated in the 2006 Gramophone Awards and the new Saariaho work with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Sakari Oramo won the Jury's Award at the BBC Music Magazine Awards 2013.

Kari Kriikku's musical inventiveness and fresh attitude towards traditional performances not only as a soloist, commissioner but also as Artistic Director of Avanti! Chamber Orchestra, have been further recognized when in 2009, Kriikku was announced recipient of the prestigious Nordic Council Music Prize.

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