



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 for the 2016/17 season Kari Kriikku has looked to more intimate sized ensembles for new additions to his repertoire. In 2016 with Quattour Diotima they will perform a new chamber work of Kaija Saariaho's, *"Figura"*, which will be further premiered at the 2017 Présence Festival, Paris. He brings Michel van der Aa's *"Hysterisis"* to Tapiola Sinfonietta. This work for small ensemble and electronics Kriikku co-commissioned giving the Finnish and Dutch premieres with Lapland Chamber Orchestra and John Storgårds and returning to Amsterdam's Concertgebouw with the Amsterdam Sinfonietta, later recording the work. As a member of the Toimii! Ensemble he will perform Magnus Lindberg's *"Kraft"* in Luxembourg.

Highlights in 2016/17 also include his third return to the New York Philharmonic performing Kaija Saariaho's D'OM LE VRAI SENS with Esa-Pekka Salonen, performances with RTE Orchestra Dublin/Sachio Fujioka, Swedish Radio Symphony with Susanna Mälki, Iceland Symphony/Anna-Maria Helsing and Lahti Symphony Orchestra with Dima Slobodeniouk.

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 Cologne Orchestra, 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 and Jukka-Pekka Saraste, and in Amsterdam's Concertgebouw with Netherlands Radio Philharmonic under the baton of Xian Zhang.

Kaija Saariaho's "D'OM LE VRAI SENS" received its' premiere with Finnish Radio Symphony and Sakari Oramo, Kimmo Hakola's colourful concerto under the baton of Semyon Bychkov (WDR Köln and La Scala, Milan), and Magnus Lindberg's concerto with a spectacular premiere at London's 2007 BBC Proms with the BBC Symphony and Bychkov. Kriikku has recorded all these works for Ondine including Jukka Tiensuu's *"Missa"* with the Helsinki Philharmonic and John Storgårds. Lindberg's Clarinet Concerto recording was nominated in the 2006 Gramophone Awards and the new Saariaho work with Finnish Radio Symphony 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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