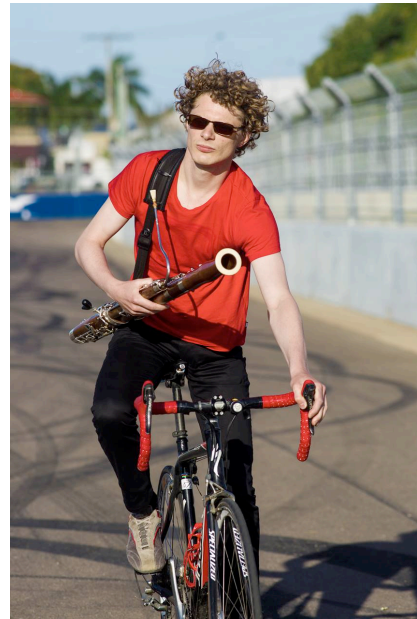


EXTREME BASSOON

Bram van Sambeek

SACD release on BIS label
Two Bassoon Concertos by
Kalevi Aho and
Sebastian Fagerlund

Lahti Symphony Orchestra conducted by
Okko Kamu and Dima Slobodeniouk



International release date 2 December 2016

"I endured long trials to define my own limits, such as when my nose started bleeding or I had to find a note that other bassoon freaks on the internet claimed to have played."

(Bram van Sambeek on the intensity of learning these two works for bassoon)

Dutch instrumentalist **Bram van Sambeek** is a passionate advocate for the versatility and expressivity of his bassoon and is the lead ambassador of the **Save The Bassoon** campaign (launched at the Holland Festival 2015).

His debut recording on the BIS label features bassoon concertos and solo works by two Finnish composers at the top of their game, **Kalevi Aho** (on a mission to compose a concerto for every main orchestral instrument) and **Sebastian Fagerlund**. These two composers have very different styles and have devised substantial symphonic works that put the bassoonist very much to the fore and push the instrument's and player's capabilities to the extreme.

In *Mana*, Fagerlund's concerto, he gives the bassoon the role of a spiritual leader (van Sambeek says he feels like a kind of shaman) conjuring up new sound worlds from the orchestra. (Kalevi Aho, on the other hand, has endeavoured to enrich and expand the solo instrument's sonic and expressive possibilities through his use of orchestration and describes his concerto as 'quite symphonic in character'.

In preparation for the concerto Fagerlund also wrote the solo piece *Woodlands*, which van Sambeek includes here together with Aho's dramatic *Solo V*. Robert von Bahr, founding director of BIS, refers to Bram as 'indecently gifted' and goes on to say "The playing is beyond incredible - how can anyone play an unwieldy instrument like that?" The Lahti Symphony Orchestra is conducted by Okko Kamu for the Fagerlund, and Dima Slobodeniouk for the Aho.

As part of van Sambeek's 2011 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award, BBT co-commissioned *Mana* and supported this recording. The Trust is also co-commissioning another concerto from Kalevi Aho for two bassoons and orchestra for Bram.

See Bram's premiere performance of Fagerlund's *Mana* here:

<http://www.classiclive.com/fagerlund-mana-full-video>

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BRAM VAN SAMBEEK **bassoon**

- First bassoonist to receive the prestigious Dutch Music Prize (2009)
- In 2011 he won a Borletti-Buitoni Award and was admitted to the Chamber Music Society Two Programme of New York's Lincoln Center.
- 2002-2011 he was principal bassoonist of Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, a post he left to pursue a solo career.
- As a soloist he has performed with, among others, the Gothenburg, Lahti and Oulu Symphony Orchestras, Netherlands Chamber Orchestra and Combattimento Consort.
- He plays regularly as guest principal with leading orchestras such as London Symphony Orchestra and Mahler Chamber Orchestra.
- His own festival, *Liquid Music Festival*, at the Muziekgebouw starts in July 2017 and aims to fluently combine extremely different styles of music within one flowing concert of 17 parts lasting three days and nights.
- He embraces many musical styles including jazz, rock, heavy metal and world music as well as classical.
- He teaches bassoon at the conservatories in Rotterdam, Amsterdam and The Hague.

- See interviews with Bram here on the BBT website:
http://www.bbtrust.com/2011/awards/bram_van_sambeek.html?view=video
- See Bram's premiere performance of Fagerlund's *Mana* here:
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