

Vagn Holmboe

Nightingale String Quartet
String Quartets Vol. 3



Vagn Holmboe (1909–96)

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Nightingale String Quartet

Gunvor Sihm, violin

Josefine Dalsgaard, violin

Marie Louise Broholt Jensen, viola

Louisa Schwab, cello

String Quartet No. 4, Op. 63 (1953–54)

1 I Andante passionato	6:28
2 II Presto espansivo	6:46
3 III Adagio affettuosa	5:44
4 IV Largo e semplice	1:47
5 V Allegretto sereno	5:08

String Quartet No. 5, Op. 66 (1955)

6 I Pesante – Fluente	8:30
7 II Adagio	6:21
8 III Energico	5:36

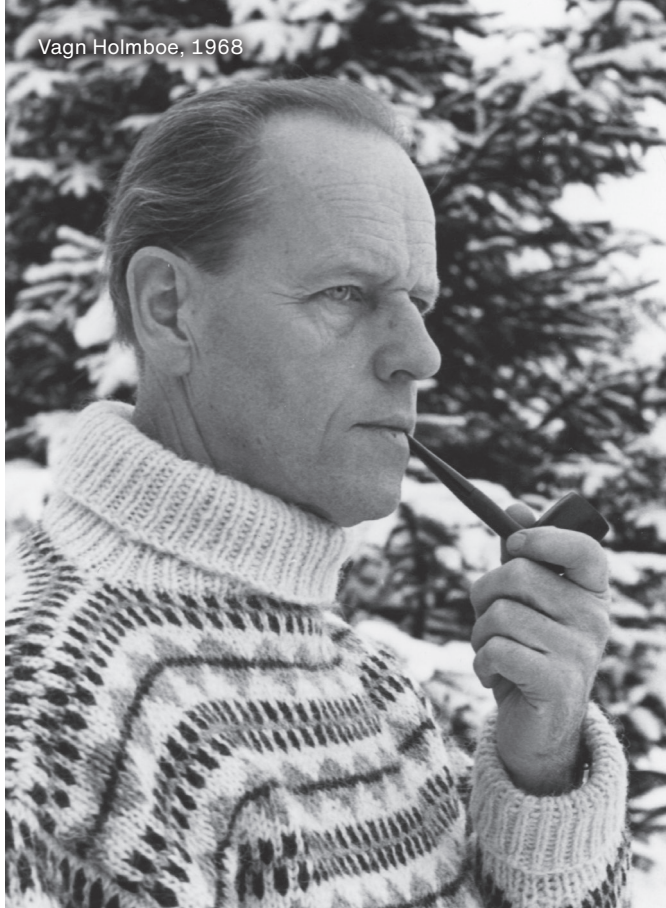
String Quartet, No. 16, Op. 146 (1981)

9 I Allegro non troppo	3:47
10 II Molto vivace	3:46
11 III Adagio	5:38
12 IV Presto	4:14

Total 63:47



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Up to Speed

By Thomas Michelsen

When he was just a young man, it was Vagn Holmboe's (1909–96) goal to write great works for choir and orchestra. He wrote in his diary for 1928–33 that he wanted to compose 'about 10 symphonies', and through the decades he more than achieved this target. He became his generation's great Nordic symphonist, producing 13 symphonies as well as his *Sinfonia in memoriam* and four single-movement works he called symphonic metamorphoses.

But the path towards Holmboe's eventual standing as an acknowledged symphonist, professor at the Royal Danish Academy of Music and his dominant position in Danish musical life was long and hard, for the young Jutlander from Horsens had almost no qualifications when he was

admitted to the Academy in Copenhagen at the age of 16 in December 1926.

The three years he spent studying at the Academy were followed up with hours spent with the composer Ernst Toch in Berlin. But Holmboe was not yet 'up to speed': that required further private coaching with his most important teacher at the Copenhagen Academy, Finn Høffding, in the first half of the 1930s, before Holmboe in 1939 could finally make his mark with his Symphony No. 2, which earned him first prize in a competition organised by the Royal Danish Orchestra. Vagn Holmboe was his own fiercest critic, and an even longer time passed before he was satisfied with his efforts as a composer of string quartets. He had the greatest respect for the classics, and for the string quartet as a genre. Because he took so long to reach the level he wanted, he ended up writing no fewer than ten quartets that he consigned to

boxes before he could finally write out the first two that he gave opus numbers in 1949. Two quartets, which together with his 3rd quartet, premiered in 1951, bear the consecutive opus numbers 46–48, and mark Holmboe's maturation based on the compositional method that became his own, namely metamorphosis.

Holmboe began working on his **String Quartet No. 4, Op. 63** in December 1953. By this point, he had fully mastered the compositional technique he was using, and was finally operating at his full creative capacity. Although his 1st quartet had been extremely well-received, even seen as a milestone in 20th century Danish music, the 4th quartet surpassed its acclaimed predecessors in richness and confidence.

Holmboe's well-known student, Per Nørgård, has pointed to his teacher's first four quartets as the group of Holmboe works which, with the Symphony No. 8, *Sinfonia bore-*

ale, had meant the most to him. The 4th quartet is dedicated to Nørgård.

Over the years Holmboe increasingly repurposed musical material that had not found a place in one piece by including it in a later work. Due to the nature of the metamorphosis process of continuous development, his pieces increasingly became interconnected strands of a unified musical stream. Much of the material of the 4th quartet stems from a solo sonata for violin that he had worked on in the early 1950s. Like quartets 2 and 3, it is in five movements, with Holmboe ratcheting up the emotional intensity from the outset in a work that starts in D but harmonically speaking treats that as the dominant in a quartet, that ends in G major.

The process of metamorphosis which can be found crystallised in Holmboe's first opus numbered quartets involves developing the music from a seed of a few tones forming one or a few intervals as the starting point for a widely branched motivic

development. In String Quartet No. 4, this consists of a five-note motive, D-E-F-G \flat -F, that can be heard from the outset in the 1st violin, which is then worked on, transformed, expanded, split apart, combined contrapuntally in various forms and compressed. This process governs the 1st movement with its emotionally 'pressed' intervals of seconds.

The 2nd movement of the quartet is based on the five-tone seed motif in a new, muted and nervous form, now in G minor, with fleeting, furtive gestures which continuously retract into a *sotto voce* that fades to a hazy ending, 'wholly misty', according to Holmboe's instructions to the Koppel Quartet who premiered the work.

The 3rd movement is brooding and dark. It treats the kernel motive in a fugal manner, before the music glides into the mere 16 bars long, almost frozen 4th movement. A short intermezzo, it begins with the kernel motive inverted, split up into octave-

displaced single notes in a pointillistic way reminiscent of Webern.

Release finally comes with the 5th movement, which after an intense run in the minor brings sensations of spring, light and birdsong as well as reminiscences of folk dance. Folk music remained a touchstone of authenticity for Holmboe throughout his life.

Speaking of folk music and music from other periods and cultures, it appears altogether in a tonality one can describe as G major, but which is mixolydian-tinged, played so that the music becomes 'as light, clear and bright as possible', as Holmboe instructed the Koppel Quartet, who premiered the five movements in January 1955.

The premiere of the 4th quartet gave rise to great excitement, not least from the critic of the newspaper *Information*, who said that 'this year's Danish chamber music event has come to pass only eight days into 1955' – and now that Holmboe

had finally found his legs as a metamorphosis composer, production could continue.

The **String Quartet No. 5, Op. 66** in three movements was written the same year, and runs for a little over 20 minutes in this recording, less than its predecessors. It had its Danish premiere at a concert in Kolding in February 1956, given by Den Nye Danske Kvartet (The New Danish Quartet). The performance is described in the printed score as having been the first, despite a number of newspapers reporting that the quartet had already played the work in Paris.

It is labelled with the word, 'metamorphosis' in its title, and the beautiful and nearly weightless music begins with a dark kernel motive consisting of a turn of a major second down followed by a turn of a minor second up, played in unison by all four strings: C#-B-C#-D-C#. The musical metamorphosis process immediately commences, as in all of Holmboe's

mature works, and as already in the 1st quartet and so often later in Holmboe's output, a leading role is assigned to the viola, which initiates the quartet's slow 2nd movement and also plays the final articulated statement before the deep C# in the cello descends a minor second to C at the very end. Here the motive from the 1st movement has in a sense pupated before taking wing in a surprising new upward form, as the final movement reveals a light and energy that allows the dark work to end in the same key as the 4th quartet – G major.

Holmboe published his book, *Mellem-spil* (Intermezzo) in 1961. In it he defended metamorphosis as an alternative to the avant-garde practices of the time, serialism and aleatoric music. He wrote that metamorphosis could unfold in two ways, either 'through a continuing development' or 'through a complete working through of the basic material, an exhaustion of all its possibilities, an

atomising of its forces'. It is the first of these types that we experience in the 5th quartet – the development through stages or movements is clear, while the working-through of the kernel motive and its intervals permeate the work. The metamorphic process that leads organically from one manifestation to another justifies Holmboe's use of progressive tonality so that, seen tonally, the music ends in a different place to that in which it began.

There is a gap of around a quarter century between the 5th quartet and Holmboe's **String Quartet No. 16** from 1981, which is the last of his standalone, completed quartets. After it come only the four six movement quartets, numbered 17–20, which together realise his longstanding ambition to musically depict the 24 hour cycle of a day, as well as the unfinished *Quartetto sereno*, Op. 197, which Holmboe was working on at the time of his death.

In the spring of 1982, not many months after the composer had published his definitive musical manifesto in the form of a book, *Det uforklarlige* (The Inexplicable), Københavns Strygekvarter (The Copenhagen String Quartet) celebrated their 25th anniversary by premiering this work, the industrious composer's opus 146. Though the Koppel Quartet were, initially, the ensemble which most frequently gave the first performances of Holmboe's string quartets, as the years passed it was the Copenhagen String Quartet led by first violinist, Tutter Givskov, that he collaborated with.

Holmboe's two greatest composer influences were Bartók, whom he had admired since he was young, and Haydn, for whose music he developed increasing esteem over the years. In most of his early and middle period quartets, Holmboe had structured his material in three or five movements, inspired by Bartók's palindromic forms. But the 16th quartet follows

the Viennese Classical model in its layout, with four movements, an allegro, a scherzo, a slow movement and a rapid finale.

By the 1980s, Holmboe had become Danish musical life's 'grand old man'. Respected and canonised, but also somewhat overshadowed by the arrival of a new generation, largely consisting of his own students. Nevertheless – or perhaps for precisely that reason – it was Holmboe, that, in October 1982, was selected to be the first featured composer in a series of portrait-concerts, 'Meeting the Composer' at Louisiana. The art museum had already released his 4th quartet on record played by the Koppel Quartet in the early 1960s, and the fall 1982 concert spanned from Holmboe's 1st quartet and his Japanese-inspired *Moya* songs to newer works like the 16th quartet.

However, the critic Jan Jacoby did not hide his opinion that Holmboe had become stagnant in the early 1980s: 'Holmboe's composition workshop', he

wrote in *Politiken* after the concert, 'drifts aimlessly with an uncommitted, lightly diverting tone ...'

This prompted the Copenhagen String Quartet's cellist Asger Lund Christiansen to defend Holmboe in the same newspaper. But interestingly, the critic's point corresponds directly to what Holmboe himself had noted earlier that same year in the third and last volume of his diary, where he considers whether he ought to renew himself artistically.

From a laborious beginning, which had seen him work at his own professional development well into the 1930s to realise his artistic ambitions, the composer in the 1980s was overtaken by new trends and younger colleagues. His music functioned perfectly, but it also prompted calls for renewal.

The text is based on Thomas Michelsen's biography of Vagn Holmboe, Det dybe og det rene (The Deep and the Pure) (Multivers, 2022).

The **Nightingale String Quartet**, an extraordinary ensemble based in Copenhagen, features Gunvor Sihm and Josefine Dalsgaard on violins, Marie Louise Broholt Jensen on viola, and Louisa Schwab on cello. The quartet honed their craft at the Royal Danish Academy of Music under the tutelage of Professor Tim Frederiksen, their unwavering mentor since the quartet's inception in 2007.

The ensemble has garnered numerous accolades at both national and international chamber music competitions. In 2010, they received DR P2's Talent Prize for their 'ardent passion, irresistible zest, and infectious sensitivity to each other's playing, bringing the classical string quartet vibrantly to life for both new and seasoned listeners.' Their accolades continued with the Léonie Sonning Talent Prize, Jacob Gade's Grant, and the Odd Fellow Lodges' Grant in 2011. In 2013, they performed as soloists with the Tivoli Symphony Orchestra upon receiving



Nightingale String Quartet

the Music Reviewers' Artist Prize. Notably, in 2014, they became the first ensemble to receive *Gramophone's* Young Artist of the Year Award.

Beyond their considerable concert activity in Denmark, the Nightingale String Quartet has toured extensively, gracing stages in Brazil, the UK, the Netherlands, China, Russia, Sweden, South Africa, Germany, and the USA. Their international profile was further enhanced by their debut at London's Wigmore Hall in January 2014.

Their ambitious recording project of Rued Langgaard's complete string quartets for Dacapo Records, initiated in 2012, substantially raised their international reputation. This series garnered the quartet Editor's Choice accolades from both *Gramophone* and *BBC Music Magazine*, the DR P2 Prize for Danish Release of the Year 2013 and secured a *Gramophone* Award nomination in 2015. Their outstanding artistry was recognised with a grant from the Carl Nielsen and

Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen Foundation in 2017 and their designation as the Wilhelm Hansen Ensemble for 2020–22. During this period, they held the position of permanent house ensemble at Copenhagen's Church of Holmen.

In 2021, the quartet embarked on an audacious new venture: recording the complete string quartets of Vagn Holmboe. The first album in this series was lauded by critics, earning Editor's Choice in *Gramophone*, which praised their performance for its 'gripping sense of drama', rendered in 'richly vivid sound'. The second volume, released in 2022, continued to garner acclaim, with *Gramophone* naming it one of the year's best, and *BBC Music Magazine* extolling their performance as 'lush, romantic playing, but equally clean and spacious.'

The Nightingale String Quartet performs on instruments generously loaned by the Augustinus Foundation.

Oppe i omdrejninger

Af Thomas Michelsen

Som helt ung var det Vagn Holmboes (1909-96) mål at skrive store værker for kor og orkester. "Henvend 10 symfonier" ville han komponere, noterer han i sin dagbog for 1928-33, og gennem årtiers slid nåede han målet. Endda godt og vel. Han blev sin generations store nordiske symfoniker med en produktion på 13 symfonier foruden *Sinfonia in memoriam* og fire ensatsede værker, som han kaldte symfoniske metamorfoser.

Men vejen til Holmboes status som anerkendt symfoniker, professor ved Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium og dominerende skikkelse i dansk musikliv blev lang og hård, for den unge jyde fra Horsens havde nærmest ingen forudsætninger, da han som 16-årig i december 1926 blev optaget på konservatoriet i København.

De tre års studier blev fulgt op med timer hos komponisten Ernst Toch i Berlin. Men endnu var Holmboe ikke *up to speed*. Det krævede yderligere privat vejledning hos hans vigtigste lærer fra konservatoriet i København, Finn Høffding, i den første halvdel af 1930'erne, før Holmboe i 1939, 29 år gammel, endelig kunne markere sig med sin 2. symfoni, som skaffede ham førstepris i en konkurrence udskrevet af Det Kongelige Kapel.

Vagn Holmboe var sin egen strengeste kritiker, og der gik endnu længere tid, før han var tilfreds med sig selv som kvartetkomponist. Han havde den største respekt for klassikerne og strygekvartetten som genre. Fordi han var så længe om at nå frem til at mestre det, han ville, nåede han at skrive ikke færre end 10 kvartetter, han kasserede, inden han i 1949 kunne renskrive de første to, han gav opusnumre. To kvartetter, der sammen med hans 3. strygekvartet, uropført 1951, bærer de fortløbende

opusnumre 46-48, og som markerer Holmboes modning på basis af den kompositionsmetode, der blev hans, nemlig metamorfosen.

4. strygekvartet, op. 63 tog han fat på i december 1953. Nu havde han styr på teknikken. Han var endelig oppe i fulde omdrejninger, og selvom modtagelsen af hans første kvartet havde været så positiv, at værket kan kaldes en milepæl i dansk 1900-tals musikhistorie, overgår 4. strygekvartet sine roste forgængere i fylde og sikkerhed.

Holmboes kendteste elev, Per Nørgård, har udpeget sin lærers første fire kvartetter som de Holmboe-værker, der sammen med 8. symfoni, *Sinfonia boreale*, har betydet mest for ham, og 4. strygekvartet er dedikeret til netop ham.

Holmboe komponerede med årene stadig oftere på den måde, at musikalsk stof, der ikke fandt plads i ét værk, indgik i senere værker. På grund af metamorfoseprocessens karakter af fortløbende bevægelse

blev værkerne i stadig højere grad til som dele af en samlet musikalsk strøm, og meget af materialet i 4. strygekvartet stammer fra en solosonate for violin, han havde arbejdet på i begyndelsen af 1950'erne. Ligesom 2. og 3. strygekvartet er den 4. i fem satser, og Holmboe har skruet op for den følelsesmæssige intensitet i begyndelsen af et værk, hvor det tonale udgangspunkt d funktionsharmonisk set afslører sig som dominantplanet i en kvartet, der slutter i G-dur.

Metamorfosen, som den findes udkrystalliseret i Holmboes første opusnummererede kvartetter, består i at udvikle musikken af en kim af få toner, der danner et eller få intervaller som udgangspunkt for en vidt forgretnet motivudvikling. I 4. strygekvartet drejer det sig om et femtonigt kim-motiv, d-e-f-ges-f, der høres straks fra begyndelsen i førsteviolinen, og som derefter bearbejdes og forandres. Motivet præger 1. sats med sine stemningsmæssigt 'trykkede'

sekunder, idet det udvides, udsættes for motivafspaltning, føres kontrastpunktisk mod sig selv i forskellige gestalter og komprimeres.

Kvartettens 2. sats bygger på det femtonige kimmotiv i en ny, nervøs sordineret skikkelse. Nu i g-mol. Satsen præges af flygtige bevægelser, som hele tiden kryber tilbage i *sotto voce*, og slutningen "skal være helt tåget", som Holmboe indskærpede over for Koppel-Kvartetten, der uropførte værket.

3. sats er rugende og mørk. Den behandler kimmotivet fugeret, inden musikken glider over i den bare 16 takter lange, nærmest frosne 4. sats. Som et kort intermezzo begynder den med kimmotivet i omvendning, splittet op i oktavforlagte enkelttoner på punktmusikalsk vis som hos Webern.

Forløsnings kommer med 5. sats, der efter et intenst forløb i mol bringer fornemmelser af forår, lys og fuglesang samt mindelser om folkedans. Folkemusik var for Holmboe livet igenem synonym med ægte musik.

Apropos folkemusik og musik fra andre perioder og kulturer foregår det alt sammen i en tonalitet, man kan beskrive som G-dur, men som er mixolydisk farvet – spillet, så musikken bliver "så let, klar og lys som muligt", bad Holmboe Koppel-Kvartetten, der holdt de fem satser over dåben i januar 1955.

Uropførelsen af 4. strygekvartet affødte stor begejstring. Ikke mindst hos avisen Informations anmelder, der profeterede, at "årets danske kammermusikbegivenhed kom til at falde kun otte dage inde i 1955" – og da Holmboe endegyldigt havde fundet sine ben som metamorfosekomponist, kunne produktionen fortsætte.

5. strygekvartet, op. 66 i tre satser skrevet samme år er med lidt over 20 minutters spilletid i denne indspilning kortere end de forrige. Den fik sin danske førsteopførelse af Den Nye Danske Kvartet ved en koncert i Kolding i februar 1956. En opførelse,

der i det trykte partitur er angivet som uropførelsen, på trods af at kvartetten ifølge flere danske aviser inden da havde spillet værket i Paris.

Den blev præsenteret med ordet metamorfose i titlen, og den smukke, til sidst nærmest svævende musik begynder med en mørk motivkerne bestående af en stor sekunddrejning nedad fulgt af en lille sekunddrejning opad spillet unison af alle fire strygere: cis-h-cis-d-cis. Den musikalske forvandlingsproces går som i alle Holmboes modne værker straks i gang, og som allerede i 1. strygekvartet og så ofte senere i Holmboes produktion er en førende rolle tildelt bratschen, der indleder kvartettens langsomme 2. sats og også får det sidste artikulerede ord, inden celloens dybe cis til afslutning bevæger sig en lille sekund ned til tonen c.

Her har motivet fra 1. sats så at sige forpuppet sig, inden det går på vingerne i en overraskende ny, opadgående form, da musikken i sidste sats afslører et lys og en energi, som

lader det mørke værk ende samme sted som 4. kvartet, nemlig i G-dur.

I sin bog *Mellemspil* fra 1961, hvor Holmboe forsvarer metamorfosen som alternativ til tidens avantgardestrømninger i form af serialisme og aleatorik, skriver han, at metamorfosen kan forløbe på to måder. Enten "gennem en kontinuerlig udvikling" eller "gennem en fuldstændig gennemarbejden af basis-stoffet, en opbrugen af alle dets muligheder, en atomisering af dets kræfter", og det er det første, man oplever i 5. strygekvartet. Udviklingen gennem stadier eller satser er tydelig, samtidig med at bearbejdelserne af kernemotivet og dets intervaller gennemsyrlig billedet. Netop metamorfosen, der organisk fører fra én fremtrædelsesform til en anden, gør det følgerigtigt, at Holmboe arbejder med progressiv tonalitet, så musikken tonalt set ender et andet sted, end den begyndte.

Der er et gab på godt og vel et kvart århundrede mellem 5. strygekvartet og Holmboes 16. strygekvartet fra 1981, der er den sidste af hans enkeltstående, fuldendte kvartetter. Efter den følger kun de fire seks-satsede kvartetter nr. 17-20, som tilsammen realiserer en mangeårig ambition om at beskrive døgnet 24 timer i musik, samt den ufuldendte *Quartetto sereno*, op. 197, som han var i gang med, da han døde.

I foråret 1982 – ikke mange måneder efter at komponisten havde udgivet sin definitive musikalske poetik i form af bogen *Det uforklarlige* – fejrede Københavns Strygekvartet 25-års jubilæum ved at uropføre dette den flittige komponists opus 146.

Efter Koppel-Kvartetten i begyndelsen havde været det ensemble, der hyppigst uropførte Holmboes strygekvartetter, blev det med årene Københavns Strygekvartet ledet af primaria Tutter Givskov, han arbejdede sammen med.

Holmboes to største komponistforbilleder var Bartók, som han havde beundret, fra han var ung, og Haydn, hvis musik han med årene kom til at sætte meget højt. I de fleste af sine tidlige og mellemste kvartetter har Holmboe struktureret stoffet i tre eller fem satser med inspiration fra Bartóks palindromformer. Men 16. strygekvartet er som hos wienerklassikerne lagt an i fire satser med præg af allegro, scherzoagtig sats, langsom sats og hurtig finale.

Holmboe var i 1980'erne blevet dansk musiklivs 'grand old man'. Respekteret og kanoniseret, men også rykket noget i baggrunden på bekostning af en ny generation, der i høj grad bestod af hans elever. Ikke desto mindre – eller måske netop af den grund – var det i oktober 1982 Holmboe, der var udset til at være det første navn i Louisianas portrætkoncertserie *Møde med komponisten*. Kunstmuseet havde allerede på overgangen til 1960'erne udgivet hans 4. stryge-

kvartet på plade spillet af Koppel-Kvartetten, og koncerten i efteråret 1982 spændte fra Holmboes 1. strygekvartet og hans japanskinspirerede *Moya*-sange til nye værker som netop 16. strygekvartet.

Anmelderen Jan Jacoby lagde imidlertid ikke skjul på, at han mente, at Holmboe i begyndelsen af 1980'erne var kørt fast: "Holmboes kompositionsværksted," skrev han efter koncerten i Politiken, "joller modstandsløst afsted med en uengageret, let diverterende tone ..."

Det fik Københavns Strygekvartets cellist Asger Lund Christiansen til at rykke ud og forsvare Holmboe i samme avis. Men interessant nok svarer anmelderens pointe fuldstændigt til den, Holmboe tidligere samme år har noteret i den sidste af sine tre dagbøger, hvor han diskuterer med sig selv, at han bør forny sig kunstnerisk.

Fra en slidsom begyndelse, hvor han til langt op i 1930'erne måtte videreuddanne sig privat for at kunne

realisere, hvad han ville kunstnerisk, var komponisten i 1980'erne overhalet af nye tendenser og yngre kollegaer. Hans musik fungerede perfekt, men den fremkaldte også krav om fornyelse.

Teksten bygger på Thomas Michelsens biografi om Vagn Holmboe, Det dybe og det rene (Forlaget Multivers, 2022).

Nightingale String Quartet er et ekstraordinært ensemble, der har base i København og består af Gunvor Sihm og Josefine Dalsgaard, violiner, Marie Louise Broholt Jensen, bratsch, og Louisa Schwab, cello. Kvartetten er uddannet fra Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium i København, hvor professor Tim Frederiksen siden kvartetens dannelse i 2007 har været trofast mentor.

Nightingale String Quartet er prisvindere ved flere nationale og internationale kammermusik-konkurrencer og modtog i 2010 DR P2's Talentpris for "med brændende passion, uimodståelig gejst og smittende indbyrdes lydhørhed at få den klassiske strygekvartet til at sprælle af liv – så musikken taler direkte og stærkt til både nye og gamle lyttere". Kvartetten modtog i 2011 Léonie Sonnings Talentpris, Jacob Gades Legat samt de Storkøbenhavnske Odd Fellow Logers Legat. I 2013 var Nightingale String Quartet solist med Tivolis Symfoniorkester i forbindelse

med modtagelsen af Musiknævnderingens Kunstnerpris, og i 2014 blev kvartetten – som det første ensemble nogensinde – tildelt Gramophones 'Young Artist of the Year Award'.

Foruden omfattende koncertvirksomhed i Danmark har Nightingale String Quartet turneret i blandt andet Brasilien, England, Holland, Kina, Rusland, Sverige, Sydafrika, Tyskland og USA. Kvartetten debuterede i Wigmore Hall i London i januar 2014.

Serien med indspilningerne af alle Rued Langgaards strygekvartetter for Dacapo Records, der indledtes i 2012, sendte Nightingale String Quartet til tops internationalt med udmærkelser som 'Editor's Choice' i både Gramophone og BBC Music Magazine, DR P2 Prisen for 'Årets Danske Udgivelse' i 2013 og en Gramophone Award-nominering i 2015. I 2017 blev Nightingale String Quartet hædret med Carl Nielsen og Anne Marie Carl-Nielsens Legat, og i 2019 blev kvartetten udnævnt til Wilhelm Hansen Ensemble 2020-22.

Fra 2020-22 var Nightingale String Quartet desuden husensemble i Holmens Kirke.

I 2021 gik kvartetten i gang med et nyt stort indspilningsprojekt: Vagn Holmboes samlede strygekvartetter. Første album i serien fik lutter rosende omtale og blev i Gramophone kåret til 'Editor's Choice': "Nightingale String Quartets undersøgelse af den danske komponist Vagn Holmboes strygekvartetter kunne ikke få en mere lovende start: Fremført med en gribende sans for drama og indfanget rigt og intenst."

Også Vol. 2, der udkom i 2022, høstede stor ros internationalt. Albummet blev udvalgt som et af årets bedste af Gramophone, og i BBC Music Magazine blev indspilningen beskrevet som "en fornøjelse – frodigt, romantisk spillet, men samtidig lige så rent og rummeligt."

Nightingale String Quartet spiller på instrumenter venligst udlånt af Augustinus Fonden.



DDD

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Producer: Tim Frederiksen

Sound engineering, editing, mixing and mastering: Ragnheiður Jónsdóttir

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Up to Speed, by Thomas Michelsen, translated from the Danish by Colin Roth

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