

Watch

Music for strings, piano and electronics
by Jostein Stalheim



Amalie Stalheim — cello
Vertavo String Quartet
Sergej Osadchuk — piano

Watch

The album Watch is a selection of music for strings, piano and live electronics composed by Jostein Stalheim from 1989 to the present day. It ranges from solo pieces to chamber works such as piano quintet, string quartet and sound recordings.

Kluhmi was written during composition studies with Lasse Thoresen where a small motif undergoes abrupt and gradual transformations through variations in timbre, extended techniques and space-time. The solo piece is shaped as a story about an old cellist looking back on his musical life; fragments of lines reminiscent of well-known works and a fusion of different stylistic expressions from romantic motifs to experimental improvisations.

Av garde is a pun on avant-garde and the act of traveling away. Here we also talk about various sonic and technical variations from visual abstractions such as dot-dash-flat to allusions to baroque solo works for violin. Other works in the same se-

ries are Corriendo, avgard(H)erbarium, and ...langt av garde... The title is also the basis for the name of the Avgarde Concert Series.

Dialog for solo piano was written on commission from Einar Røttingen and uses various forms of dialogue/conversation. Sometimes it is a dialogue between two hands, sometimes a dialogue with oneself and other times a conversation between a pianist and a piano.

Flate for piano quintet is based on three notes from the composer Fartein Valen. Stalheim received the Valen Scholarship in 2000 and wrote this sound-based work as a composer in residence, inspired by a stay in Valen's home. The music contains slow sounds that come to the surface and then disappear below the audible. Towards the end, the tempo increases and ends in a quasi didjeridoo loop before disappearing again. It was commissioned by the Schubert Ensemble and the Grieg Academy, UiB.

The string quartet a la larga (In the long run) was written for the Vertavo Quartet on commission from the Sæverudjubileet 1997. The work is based on the prelude to Harald Sæverud's Kjempeviseslåttene and microdynamics in his other works. The highlight of the quartet is a part with almost inaudible sounds; which casts shadows of memories, and is a tribute to a number of string quartets by other composers.

The suite "Å, fugl'n sit på bjørkekvist og syng so ven ei vise" is based on a folk tune from Voss where Stalheim grew up. The melody is broken up into small parts and shaped as short exercises in interaction that include different playing techniques. The folk tune appears towards the end of the 6th movement where it is reharmonized. The suite was commissioned by Per Gisle Haagenrud and was performed in Grieghallen, Bergen by young musicians from Halsnøy Summer School. The other movements are 1st The Branch; 2nd Chroma(tic); 3rd Clusters; 4th movement is a

calm repetitive walk, and the 5th movement is called Five; and the last movement is a fast finale. The folk tune ends with the text: "but my little boy must taste the rice"

Jostein Stalheim

Jostein Stalheim

Jostein Stalheim has composed the music for *Watch*, world premiered 2016 at Dansens Hus, Oslo. Stage music comprises a considerable part of his production. He also initiated and performed the multimediashow in Bergen, 2019, with paintings by Line Hvoslef. This performance included soundpainted choir, four microtonal guitars, electronics and his improvising ensemble F-nimbus.

Stalheim is now composing his 3rd opera; *Zosimos' nine lives*; a telematic and haptic performance which includes partners in Germany, Sweden and Egypt. Stalheim contributed as one of two composers to the science opera *Rosetta's Stone* with world premiere 2016 in San Francisco. In the same year he had several large projects including Soundpainting; *fex* with the contemporary ensemble BIT20 and Performance Artist Bergen.

He has worked in theatres both as composer and musician. He has studied both accordeon and com-

position in Copenhagen, Helsinki and Oslo. Stalheim is internationally recognized as an accordion soloist and is performing at festivals and with several international orchestras and ensembles. Stalheim appears regularly in European festivals as soundpainter, performer and composer also on several CDs and videos. Stalheim is now Professor at the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences in Norway.

The excerpt from *Watch* is premiered by Amalie Stalheim in the dance performance with the same name staged by Karen Foss "Quiet Works" (2016) at Dansens Hus, Studio Stage/Oslo. *Watch/2016* – involves further investigation into the unpredictability, speed, and rampant extortion, shaped into a shifty and impatiently smouldering play, somewhat *volatile* and stretched into an all-round space, light and carpeted for dancers, musician, and audience to be present in.



Vertavo String Quartet

Vertavo String Quartet is internationally recognized as one of today's leading string quartets. Formed in Norway in 1984 by four teenage girls, the group now stands as one of the world's longest-performing all-female string quartets. Three of the original members – Øyvør Volle, Berit Cardas, and Bjørg Lewis – remain, joined by violinist Annabelle Meare since 2012.

Renowned for their rich sound, deep cohesion, and storytelling through music, Vertavo performs at major venues and festivals across Europe, the US and Scandinavia, including Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw, Carnegie Hall and the BBC Proms. While rooted in the core quartet repertoire, the ensemble is equally celebrated for their commanding interpretations of contemporary music, with works by Ligeti, Adès, Widmann, Gubaidulina, Gabriela Frank, and Saariaho in their repertoire. They premiered Poul Ruders' latest string quartet to great acclaim.

Their extensive discography includes music by Beethoven, Brahms, Grieg, Bartók, Debussy and Sibelius. Their recording of Debussy and Grieg

earned the Diapason d'Or, and their 2020 Verdi/Sibelius album led to a nomination for Germany's OPUS Klassik Ensemble of the Year (2021). Vertavo received the prestigious Grieg Prize in 2005 and founded Vertavofestivalen in 2016—an international chamber music festival in

Norway. Highlights include their “Absolutt Haydn!” marathon and collaborations with artists such as Leif Ove Andsnes and Paul Lewis.





Bergen String Quartet

The Bergen String Quartet was established in 2022 and consists of Alexander Kagan, Lars Magnus Steinum, Liene Klava, and Pierre Doumenge. After several years of collaboration in the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, they decided to form a string quartet together. They all shared a deep passion for the string quartet repertoire and had a strong desire to explore new material as an ensemble.

With backgrounds from Norway, France, and Eastern Europe, they aim to represent the cultural heritage of their respective homelands while also performing well-known repertoire within the genre. Drawing on the members' extensive experience and broad network, they look forward to appearing at festivals both nationally and internationally, and in time, forging new

relationships with composers and arrangers.

Based in Bergen, they are committed to presenting music by well-known Norwegian composers, as well as collaborating with contemporary composers through commissions and recordings. Since their formation, the quartet has already performed several stand-alone concerts

in Bergen and worked with local composers such as Ørjan Matre and Jostein Stalheim.

In 2024, the quartet was invited to perform at the opening of the Baroniet Rosendal music festival alongside Leif Ove Andsnes, with Her Majesty Queen Sonja among the audience.

Amalie Stalheim — Cello

Award winning cellist Amalie Stalheim (b. 1993 in Norway) has appeared with orchestras and ensembles such as the Gulbenkian Orchestra, the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, the Swedish Radio Orchestra, the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, and the Iceland Symphony Orchestra.

In addition to performing the traditional cello concertos, Amalie is very passionate about commissioning and playing contemporary classical music. She is collaborating with some of the biggest composers today, resulting in several new cello concertos being dedicated to her.

Amalie is the winner of the Norwegian Soloist Prize 2021, the Swedish Soloist Prize 2018, the Ljunggren Competition 2015, and the Nicholas A. Firmenich Prize 2015 at the Verbier Festival.

Amalie performs on a Francesco Ruggieri cello (Cremona, 1687) generously lent to her by the Anders Sveaas' Charitable Foundation.





Eva Camilla Eikaas Stalheim — Violin

Eva Camilla Eikaas Stalheim (b. 1989) is from Bergen and began playing the violin at the age of seven. She studied for her bachelor's and master's degrees at the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo and the Royal College of Music in London. In 2016, Eva completed her Solo Performance diploma at the Hochschule Luzern in Switzerland. That same year, she performed as a soloist with the Luzern Symphony Orchestra and the Junge Philharmonie Zentralschweiz.

Eva is a permanent member of the award-winning chamber orchestra Ensemble Allegria, and she also performs regularly with the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra. During the 2016/2017 season and in autumn 2025, Eva was engaged as Associate Concertmaster (2nd Concertmaster) with the Opera Orchestra at the Norwegian National Opera & Ballet. She has also served as concertmaster for

orchestras such as Bodø Sinfonietta and Wermland Opera.

Since August 2018, Eva has been employed by the Opera Orchestra at the Norwegian National Opera & Ballet.

Sergej Osadchuk

— Piano

Sergej Osadchuk was born in the Crimea (the Ukraine). At the age of 12 he had his symphonic orchestra debut. At 15 he played the First Rachmaninov Concerto. In the same year he entered the Moscow Music College of the Moscow State Conservatory. He graduated from this College with honors and 5 years later from the Moscow State Conservatory also with the honors diploma. Then he completed the postgraduate course at the same conservatory with the honors diploma. All these years he studied with prof. Pavel Messner - pupil and later assistant of Emil Gilels.

Since 1981 he has pursued an active career as a pianist playing recitals in Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Finland, Norway, Italia, Australia, Great Britain, Germany and also participating in chamber ensembles. He has played with many orchestras including the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra under Dmitrij Kitaenko, Moscow Radio Orchestra under Fuat Mansurov, the Orchestra of the Moscow Conservatory under Leonid Nikolaev, Tromsø

Symphony Orchestra under Kjell Seim, Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra under M. Tilkin, Jönköpings Symphony Orchestra under J. Stigmer, Oslo Camerata under S. Barratt-Due and others. He has played recitals in the most prestigious Russian concert halls – the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, The International House of Music, The Sankt-Petersburg Philharmonic Hall. Sergej Osadchuk has made recordings on the Moscow Radio including Concerto II by List, Concerto by Pjrumov etc. At the same time he has had a piano teacher position at the Music College of the Moscow Conservatory.

Since 1992 he has been employed as a professor at the North Norway Conservatory in Tromsø, Norway. He has had masterclasses in Great Britain (Cardiff), Sweden (Orebro) Finland (Jyvaskula, Oulu), Germany (Karlsruhe), Norway (Oslo, Trondheim), played recitals in Bergen Festival, Grieg Festival in Oslo and others. His CD recordings (together with M. Carlsen, M. B. Kjelland and oth-



ers) have already received praise by many critics.

Sergej Osadchuk has been widely acclaimed for his extensive concertizing both in Norway and abroad.



Callum Hay Jennings — Double Bass

Canadian born bassist Callum Hay Jennings began his relationship to classical music at the age of 18. After studies with world class players Joel Quarrington in Montreal and Matthew McDonald in Berlin, Jennings has gone on to lead the double bass groups of orchestras in England, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway and Finland and been on intercontinental tours with others, including Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and Kammerphilharmonie Bremen. He has played in international chamber music festivals such as Hitzacker and Rosendal, among others. Now based in Norway, Callum is a full-time member of both the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra and BIT20 Ensemble and is Associate Professor at the Grieg Academy, University of Bergen.

Musicians:

Eva Camilla Eikaas Stalheim,
violin, track 2

Amalie Stalheim,
cello, track 1, 15

Callum Hay Jennings,
double bass, track 8–14

Sergej Osadchuk,
piano, track 4–14

Vertavo String Quartet,
track 3

Bergen String Quartet,
track 5–14

Jostein Stalheim (1960)

01	Kluhmi; seks for cello solo	06:12
02	Av garde I	04:54
03	a la larga	12:47
04	Dialogue	15:25
	Flate	
05	Del 1	02:36
06	Del 2	01:22
07	Del 3	05:36
	Å, fugln sit på bjørkekvisst og syng so ven ei vise	
08	Greina	01:08
09	Kroma	01:33
10	Klaser	00:48
11	Tranquillo ma deciso	01:31
12	Fem	01:01
13	Misterioso	02:55
14	Allegro moderato	01:46
15	Watch; utdrag	02:02

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