

# Stabekk Symphonic Wind Band Norway



***Conductor: Vegard Landaas***

***Solo violin: Elise Baatnes***

**V & A Waterfront Amphi Theatre**

**15 April 2006, 15:00**

**Cape Philharmonic Youth Wind Band, 14:00**

**Baxter Theatre Concert Hall**

**19 April 2006, 20:00**

**Tickets: R20/R50**

# Stabekk Symphonic Wind Band

## Cape Town, South-Africa April 7<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> 2006

### *Stabekk Symphonic Wind Band*

For the fourth time in less than 10 years, Stabekk Symphonic Wind Band will once again be on a concert tour with the highest standards of quality. Both on the musical and administrative level, the orchestra will demonstrate the professionalism of the Norwegian band tradition.



The Norwegian non-professional band tradition is not to be matched anywhere else in the world. It is more than hundred years ago since the first pupils' wind bands were formed at elementary schools. This was to be the beginning of a national wide wind band era. The peak of popularity was in the nineteen seventies, when practically every Norwegian elementary school had their own wind band. Still the tradition has a strong foothold. More than 50.000



Norwegian youths (being almost 10% of the total population between 8 and 19 yrs) participate in school wind bands.

As grown-ups, quite a great share of the musicians carries on playing their instruments in one of more than 500 non-professional symphonic wind bands. Due to the multitude and tradition, quite a number of these Norwegian wind ensembles perform at a very high level; internationally as well. The symphonic wind bands – both the professional ones and in particularly the non-professional ones – have a solid reputation due to their exceptional quality.



Stabekk SWB was formed in a district just west of the capital Oslo, in 1918. Throughout all its history our ambitions have been set high. Some of the band historical highlights are the performance at the return of Mr. Roald Amundsen's North Pole expedition, the first live performance of a non-professional band at national radio broadcasting in 1923 and the first prize in the national wind band championship in 1984. During the occupation by the Germans at Second World War, the instruments were hidden – but the band secretly met for rehearsals. Until the end of the fifties, membership was solely for men.

Stabekk SWB is still going strong. Partly through the repeatedly participation at the national championships, the ambition being amongst the best Norwegian wind bands is realized. The orchestra emphasizes their extensive and varied musical activity. In this context putting on large scale performances has been a cornerstone. The orchestra presents a varied repertoire, but strives to promote classic music originally written for the modern symphonic band. Also Stabekk SWB has conducted a series of successful collaborations with professional

artists at top national level. This concept of professional cooperation has been the basis of the band's former concert tours carried out to Russia, Ukraine, France and the Czech Republic. Now, the band is part in a commercial CD-release.

Stabekk SWB comprises approximately 50 active non-professional instrumentalists. The continuity amongst the members is extraordinary. Organizing and funding is based on the band members' uncompensated and voluntary effort. During the concert tour to South Africa, the orchestra wants to demonstrate their enthusiasm and excitement for the musical tradition of the symphonic wind band.



## **The Conductor**

Mr. Landaas is a renowned saxophonist with a Diploma degree from the Norwegian Academy of Music. He has played within the best national professional symphonic orchestras on different occasions, and has also given prestigious solo performances with several of them.

Landaas also performs frequently as soloist, e.g. with the Norwegian Broadcasting Orchestra and Bergen Chamber Ensemble. On several occasions his performances has been broadcasted on national public radio. August 2004 he made a recording of the saxophone concerto "Nettene Finnes" together with the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra. The composer of the concerto, Yngve Slettholm, has dedicated it to Landaas, who performed it first time with the Norwegian Broadcasting Orchestra spring 2000.

Vegard Landaas is also a very skilled producer of a of music recordings.

Over the last years Landaas has widened his experience as conductor. The premiere performance of the composition "Going to pieces without falling apart" by the Danish composer and musician, Mr. Palle Mikkelsen, was performed by Vegard Landaas conducting Bergen Chamber Ensemble spring 2003.

Since 2001 Vegard Landaas has been engaged as Stabekk Symphonic Wind Band's chief conductor. Due to his dedication, inspiration and outstanding musical competence, the band is constantly performing at a very high level. Over the last years the band has received several splendid reviews. The orchestra's latest CD-recording is mostly due to Vegard Landaas' hard work and inspiration. He is soloist, conductor and producer in this recording. The idea of this CD is to present solo saxophone music accompanied by the symphonic wind band.



Photo: © Fotofil/Eli Berge

## **The Soloist**

Being just eight years old, Ms Elise Baatnes debuted as violinist with Trondheim Symphonic Orchestra. This was to be the early start of an impressive career as musician at top level. Since then, Baatnes has gained extensive experience as soloist, orchestra member, concert master, chamber musician conductor and administrator.

Over the years Elise Baatnes has been concerting with numerous orchestras in Scandinavia and Europe; including all Norwegian symphonic orchestras. She has given a series of recitals and television- and radio-performances. Baatnes has collaborated with famous conductors like Mariss Jansons, Herbert Blomstedt, Manfred Honeck, Marek Janowski, Marc Soustrot, Hans Graf, Heinrich Schiff, Daniel Harding, Gerd Albrecht, Thomas Dausgaard, Ole Kristian Ruud and Eivind Aadland.

In Norway Elise Baatnes is an active and wide-ranging artist, regularly doing performances at the at the most renowned festivals (Bergen International Festival, International Chamber Music Festival in Stavanger, Risoer Festival of Chamber Music, Oslo Chamber Music Festival and several others). She also regularly works together with the greatest Norwegian pianists (e.g. Leif Ove Andsnes and Haavard Gimse).

As former member of the prestigious Vertavo String Quartet, Baatnes has as career as chamber musician as well. Four young female musicians first formed the quartet in Oslo in 1984. The Quartet first captured international attention when they won no less than four awards including the First Prize at the 2nd Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition in 1995.



Photo: Yvonne Holth

In addition Elise Baatnes has extensive experience as leading orchestra member. Since 2003 she has been engaged as 1<sup>st</sup> concert-master at WDR, Radio Symphony Orchestra in Köln, Germany. She has also had extensive engagements as 1<sup>st</sup> concert-master in e.g. Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra as well as the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Over the years she has gained a more extensive experience as manager and conductor. Part of this is her position as musical director of Bergen Chamber Ensemble since 1997. She also has had engagements as conductor of several military wind bands, a regional youth symphonic orchestra and Risoer Festival Strings.

Ms. Elise Baatnes has been soloist twice before with Stabekk Symphonic Wind Band and once again she will definitely be one of the highlights at the concert performances on the orchestra's South Africa Tour.

## ***The Concert Tour and Programme***

7 - 23 April 2006 Stabekk SWB will carry out a concert tour to South Africa. This is not the first time the orchestra is heading for a significant tour like this. Earlier we have toured in Russia, Ukraine, France and the Czech Republic.

This time Cape Town in South Africa will be the scene of events. The orchestra is to put on concert performances at different venues in the city and its surrounding area.

The main performance will take place in Baxter Theatre Concert Hall on April 19th. Together with the Norwegian violinist, Elise Baatnes, this will guarantee it to become an outstanding happening, with musical performances at the highest level.

We are also having major focus at putting on a main outdoor performance. This will be held at the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront Amphi Theatre; the highly popular outdoor stage in the pulsating centre of Cape Town. In addition joint performances with local wind orchestras are within the scope. The band will also be performing at schools and universities during our stay.

### Concert Tour Program:

Florent Schmitt	DIONYSIAQUES, opus 62 for large military band
Carl Nielsen	PARAPHRASE on "Nearer my God to thee", FS 63 (1912) For Wind Ensemble, edited by Wayne Gorder
Roy Hellvin**	ONE FOR TINKA
Geirr Tveitt*	THE OLD MILL ON THE BROOK, opus 204 Edited by Scott Rogers
Olav Anton Thommessen**	STABSARABESK
Edvard Grieg*	FUNERAL MARCH to Rikard Nordraak* Edited by Jan Eriksen**
Johan Halvorsen*	HALLINGDAL BATTALION'S MARCH Edited by Jan Eriksen**
Helge Havgård Sunde**	charM, from 21 Marches for the 21st Century
Halvor Haug**	EXIT for Band
Øistein Sommerfeldt**	TORSTEINEN march, opus 68
Lars Erik Gudim**	I WATCH YOU OUTSIDE THE SMALL WINDOW (trad.)
Johannes Hanssen*	VALDRESMARCH
Oscar Borg*	OLD HALDEN Edited by Trond Kolaas**
Henry Mancini	MANCINI-MELODIES Arranged by Øivind Westby**
Michel Legrand/ Jacques Demy	THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG from the movie, arranged by Øivind Westby**
Trygve Madsen**	PER THE FIDDLER for Symphonic Band
Oscar Borg*	KING HAAKON VII. HONORARY MARCH Edited by Bjørn Melleberg**

### With solo violin:

Pablo Sarasate	CARMEN FANTASY, opus 25 for violin and band Orchestration by Odd Terje Lysebo**
Oscar Borg*	BALLADE, opus 16 for violin and band edited by Åge Hermansen**
Vittorio Monti:	CZARDAS Orchestration by Willy Hautvast

In addition to select music originally written for the symphonic band, we pay great attention to perform Norwegian music. Our SA Tour Programme will give samples from the whole palate, from traditional folk music, from western classic style, via marches and show pieces, to the rather complex structures and shades of today. In the program, composers marked with (\*) are Norwegian deceased composers, while (\*\*) refers to Norwegian contemporary composers and arrangers.

We would like to briefly present some of the music we will perform:

**charM** – a childhood memory: “It is the 1970s and in a basement in the small village Stryn, a band conductor is trying to compose a march. It is called “S 1079”, named after the family’s Ford Taunus 12m. The youngest son is following events with interest, and after a while feels that he could make just as good a job of it. I think my first idea for writing music was a march...”

**Ballade** (originally written for violin and piano) was written in 1895 by the Norwegian “King of Marches” Oscar Borg and dedicated to the violinist Gustav Fredrik Lange. The composer later re-orchestrated the work for band and symphonic orchestra.

**The Old Mill on the Brook** - This short folk-inspired piece follows one of the Norwegian composer Geirr Tveitt’s favoured formats, namely that of a melancholy start with some rays of light filtering through to touch the central section. The mill was the centre of rural village life, and to the despairing composer, its demise represented the loss of a lifestyle which he longed to recapture – his longing and yearning wonderfully expressed here in the constant shifts from E minor to E flat minor.

The salon orchestra of the Titanic reportedly played the hymn “Nearer My God to Thee” as the ship sank on 15 April 1912. Many Danish lives were lost in the disaster and memorial services were scheduled for 21 May 1912, for which Carl Nielsen wrote this brief **Paraphrase** as an introduction to the singing of the hymn.

**One for Tinka** is written to celebrate Roy Hellvin’s dog. It is written with complicated structure, but in sound of the big band. Hellvin has also written a saxophone sonata for our conductor Mr Landaas, and we are very happy to celebrate our friend Hellvin with playing his piece on our SA Tour.

**Carmen Fantasy** - the show-stopper is by Pablo de Sarasate, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Spanish violin virtuoso. He was considered one of the great violinists of his days, and Bruch, Saint-Saens and Dvorak were among those who wrote major pieces for him. But he also wrote more than 50 pieces himself, and the best known is probably Carmen Fantasy, which was written in 1883. We are very proud to present one of the greatest violinists of these days, Ms. Elise Baatnes.

**Exit** – this piece is written for Askim Youth Band in Norway. It is a study in texture, just like many other works from Haug. This atmospheric piece is changing between long sustained chords and fanfares, going through a soft pulsing theme and culminates in a choral.

**Funeral March** – Nordraak had a decisive influence on Grieg. Building the nation’s culture was a topic very much in the wind, and the two composers wanted to create a Norwegian style. On April 1866 the devastating news of Nordraak’s death reached Grieg in Italy. And at once Grieg wrote the Funeral march in desperation and longing for his dearest friend.

**Stabsarabesk** was composed to The Staff Band of the Norwegian Armed Forces. During a short stay in Cairo, Thommessen had an unusual musical experience. Three Egyptians played in the street a hypnotic melodic ostinato, while four women swayed with the music. “The music was the same all the time, and in my head I start to improvise the theme further as I became hypnotised by the music from the street. Stabsarabesk is the answer to this experience. The piece starts with the Arabic scale and start to wander towards the end

Florent Schmitt (September 28, 1870– August 17, 1958) was a French composer. He entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1889, studying under Lavignac, Pierre Dubois, Jules Massenet, and Gabriel Fauré. In 1900 Schmitt won the Prix de Rome after his fourth attempt. Schmitt wrote 138 works with opus numbers. He composed examples of most of the major forms of music except for opera. Today his most famous pieces are La tragédie de Salome and Psalm XLVII. The especially fine Piano Quintet in B minor, written in 1908, helped establish his reputation. Other works include a violin sonata (Sonate Libre), a late string quartet, a saxophone quartet, **Dionysiaques** for wind band, and two symphonies. He was part of the group known as the Apaches. His own style, recognizably impressionistic, owed something to the example of Claude Debussy, though it had distinct traces of Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss also. From 1929 to 1939 he worked as a music critic for Le Temps, in which role he created considerable controversy, not least for his indiscreet habit of shouting out verdicts from his seat in the hall; the music publisher Huegel went so far as to call him “an irresponsible lunatic”. In 1952 he became a member of the Legion of Honour. When composing Dionysiaques in 1913 Schmitt had established his personal style – great contrasts where the contrapuntal mastery alternates with simple, almost naïve pieces. His music is often harmonically advanced as well as rhythmically complex.

Stabekk SWB would also like to thank:

The Norwegian Fund for performing artists for financial support

The Municipality of Bærum for financial support

The Norwegian Band Federation for administrative assistance

Panorama Music for music instrument equipment to children in Cape Town

Norsk Noteservice AS for music equipment to children in Cape Town