

Nokon kjem til å komme/Somebody is Going to Come

A Chamber Opera by Knut Vaage

After the play: *Somebody is Going to Come* by Jon Fosse

Music: [Knut Vaage](#)

Libretto: [Jon Fosse](#)



(Photo: Simon Banham)

REVIEWS

"This musically inventive and dramatically tense work was well received and deserves a wider hearing."

Matthew Rye, BBC Music Magazine, february 2000

"Vaage's treatment of Jon Fosse's play about a young couple that moves into a house beset by spirits of its former inhabitants has theatrical pulse and achieves probing instrumental effects despite an orchestra of only eight players. There's room for more grateful vocal writing, but *Someone Is Coming* revealed a promising dramatic talent."

George W. Loomis, International Herald Tribune, 11/10-2000

I was urging someone to read.

This is a chamber opera of authentic quality, which makes a real virtue of the limitations of the genre; it is a powerful study in psychological claustrophobia, in the quasi-Pinteresque threat of the outsider who seems essentially an externalisation of the dynamics which govern the relationship between the other characters.

The CD comes very handsomely packaged, with a full libretto in both Norwegian and English translation.

Glyn Purslove, [musicweb-international](#), august 2006

"The Ultima Festival kicked off on Friday. The most striking work was Knut Vaage's opera *Nokon kjem til å komme* based on the play by Jon Fosse."

Idar Karevold, Aftenposten

"More of this sort of thing, please! *Nokon kjem til å komme* is in many ways an austere opera. Three singers on a very simply set stage, a compact libretto, no grand gestures. Yet the music carries the drama and enriches it."

Astrid Kvalbein, Verdens Gang, 8.10.2000

"It's a bold project – but the result, which premiered in Oslo on Friday, is successful in many respects. Vaage has written music that does not attempt to mimic Fosse's characteristic, repetitive style, but which nonetheless matches the words in its own distinctive way.

Peter Larsen, Bergens Tidende, 8.10.2000

"A bullseye for Fosse and Vaage's opera. Knut Vaage is convincing in his début as an opera composer; he elucidates and stylizes Jon Fosse's text, giving the singers something to grapple with."

Halvor Fjermeros, Klassekampen, 9.10.2000

Reviews in German:

Opernglas: [Nice review](#)

Der Opernfreund: [Review](#)

(...) Das Libretto nach einem Schauspiel von Jon Fosse erinnert an die düstere Melancholie von frühen Bergman-Filmen. Der norwegische Komponist Knut Vaage hat dazu eine

dramatisch-dräuende Musik auf der Schwelle zur Atonalität geschrieben, die immer wieder zu Liedfragmenten anhebt.

So minimalistisch, leise und schlafwandlerisch verschwebend der erste Teil des Abends daher kommt, so krachend-komisch und brüllend-bunt, als schräges Spektakel, wird der zweite Teil mit dem Titel „Ein Mond aus kochender Milch“ inszeniert. In der Kammeroper aus Luxemburg will ein Eventmanager in einer alten Molkerei eine Disco eröffnen. Während der Verhandlungen mit der Erbin werden beide von einem Killer überfallen (...)

Theo Schneider

LINKS:

Video: [Complete Opera \(TNT – Luxembourg\):](#)

[Soundtrack:](#)

[Pictures:](#)

[Interview](#) in connection to release of the recording:

PRODUCTION:

(World Premiere)

Music: Knut Vaage

Libretto: Jon Fosse

Translation: Michael McCarthy/Knut Vaage

Director: Michael McCarthy

Dramaturg: Michael McCarthy

Ensemble/ Musicians/ Orchestra: Opera Vest/BIT20 Ensemble

Musical director: Ingar Bergby

Scenographer/ Costume designer: Simon Banham

Light design: Ace McCarron

PERFORMANCE-HISTORY

Commissioned by Opera Vest

World Performance in Oslo, Ultima festival, 2000

2015

Germany – several performances at Stadttheater Giessen

2014

Germany- several performances at Stadttheater Giessen
Theatre National du Luxembourg

2013

Germany – several performances at Phalz Theater, Kaiserslautern

2000

Norway - Ultima Festival, Oslo Norway

Norway – several performances at Den Nationale Scene in Bergen

ABOUT

Jon Fosse is a major figure in the modern literature of Norway. Initially establishing his reputation as a novelist, he has largely worked as a dramatist since the mid-1990s and his work has been extensively performed across Europe and in the U.S.A. He has been widely described as the most important Norwegian dramatist since Ibsen. He writes in a very austere fashion, brief speeches often repetitively patterned. *Someone is Going to Come* (Nokon kjem til å komme) was first performed in 1996. A later Parisian production of the play prompted *Le Monde* to describe him as “the Beckett of the 21st century”.

Knut Vaage (working in collaboration with Fosse) adapted Fosse’s play as the libretto for his own one act opera, which was premiered in 2000. The text has a distinctive poetry, creating through its highly patterned language a powerful exploration of the tensions inherent in human relationships; it occupies a theatrical idiom which, paradoxically, straddles the boundaries between realism and absurdism. It presents an elemental theatrical situation in simple language.

A man and a woman seek - so they say and perhaps so they believe - to be alone together; they have bought a very isolated old house near the sea; we know nothing of them, they are called simply ‘He’ and ‘She’. The tensions in their relationship are hinted at; another character (‘The Man’) appears briefly. The house, which was formerly occupied by the grandmother of ‘The Man’, is gradually revealed to contain disturbing reminders of its previous occupants – from photos on the walls to an unmade bed, right down to an unemptied chamber pot. ‘The Man’ makes a pass at ‘She’. The cracks between ‘He’ and ‘She’ widen.

Vaage’s setting employs an eight-piece ensemble: viola, flute, clarinet, bassoon, double bass, cello and two percussionists. The instrumental resources are well used; the instrumental intimacy aptly but powerfully evokes the jealousies and fears of ‘He’ and ‘She’, the laughing, disturbed menace of ‘The Man’. Perhaps, though, one might have hoped for a little more by way of musical evocation of the surrounding emptiness.

All three singers give intense, compelling performances, sustaining the tension throughout. Siri Torjesen, well known for her work in contemporary repertoire, and Ketil Hugaas, experienced operatic performer, work particularly well together and are utterly convincing in their presentation of the central relationship. They disturb and move the listener in equal measure. Though Nils Harald Sødal has a less prominent role, he handles it very persuasively, not least in his long set-piece towards the end of the opera, which is a minor masterpiece of menace and dramatic pacing.

Someone is Going to Come moves to a memorable conclusion, musically speaking, which I wouldn’t want to give away any more than I’d want to reveal the ending of a detective story (From the CD booklet. Text by Michael McCarthy)

MUSICAL STYLE

Contemporary opera

THE BOOK

[Nokon kjem til å komme – Wikipedia](#)

ORIGINAL CAST:

[Lars Fosser](#)

[Siri Torjesen](#)

[Nils Harald Sødal](#)

CAST

3 voices (S/Ten/Bar)

LIBRETTO

[Norwegian:](#)

[English:](#)

For German version

Contact:

[Felix Bloch Erben](#)

SCORING

3 voices (S/Ten/Bar)

fl/bs fl/pic

cl/bcl

bsn

2 perc

vla

vcl

cb

SCORE

[Score sample](#)

[Piano Score](#)

[German Score](#)

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KNUT VAAGE ON SPOTIFY

BIOGRAPHIES

Knut Vaage - composer

Born 1961, lives in Bergen where he works as a composer. He graduated as a pianist and composer from the Grieg Academy in Bergen. Vaage has worked in different styles of music, though concentrating on improvised and contemporary music. Many of Vaage's projects have investigated the boundaries between improvisation and composed music. Investigation of the acoustic/electronic hybrid-sound is another important topic in his music. Vaage's production ranges from symphonic works and opera to solo pieces. His music is frequently performed at concerts and festivals in Norway and abroad. Vaage was nominated for the Nordic Music Prize for 2020.

Simon Banham - scenographer

Simon is a freelance scenographer who also teaches at Aberystwyth University, Wales (www.aberscenography.co.uk) where he is the Reader in Scenography and Theatre Design. Simon is co-founder of the theatre company Quarantine (www.qtine.com) which was established in 1998, since when he has created the scenography for all their productions. He recently collaborated with Richard Gregory of Quarantine and the artist Jeremy Deller, to create the opening event for the Manchester international Festival 'What is the city but the people' ('Best Event' at the inaugural cultural awards ceremony in Manchester 2018). He has been developing a continuing body of work in contemporary opera with Music Theatre Wales over the past 30 years as well as a series of works for National Theatre Wales (The Persians was awarded 'Best Design' 2010 in the UK theatre awards).

Michael McCarthy - Artistic Director

He has directed over 40 contemporary operas, including almost all of MTW's productions. Other productions include large-scale outdoor stagings of Tosca and Nabucco, and productions of La Traviata, Così fan Tutte, Il Re Pastore, Fidelio and Don Giovanni. Also, Cinderella by Peter Maxwell Davies for WNO and S4C Television, The Lighthouse for BBC2 TV, The Forbidden Hymn - a community opera in the South Wales Valleys and The Feast of the Pheasant for Glasgow 1990.

He was awarded Best Director at the Wales Theatre Awards for his world premiere production of *The Trial* by Philip Glass in a co-production by MTW and the Royal Opera House. His production of *Greek* won Outstanding Achievement in Opera at the TMA Awards. He was awarded an MBE in 2016.

Bruno Berger-Gorski - Stage director (Kaiserlautern)

Bruno Berger-Gorski, a German director with Polish roots, lives in Vienna and graduated from the University of Vienna with a Master's degree in Theatre, Film and Media Studies. Berger-Gorski's special interests are contemporary music as well as discoveries and rediscoveries of composers who were labelled "degenerate" and were unjustly forgotten. He has staged more than 100 works of music theatre worldwide at renowned opera houses <https://brunoberger-gorski.com/biography/>

Stephanie Kuhlmann – Stage Director Giessen

<https://www.operabase.com/artists/stephanie-kuhlmann-29011/performances/en>

PHOTOS

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(From "Nokon kjem til å komme". Photo: Dietmar Janeck)



("Someone is going to come" performance in Kaiserslautern, Germany)