

An abstract painting with a vertical split. The left side is dark grey with horizontal yellow brushstrokes. The right side is light blue with horizontal red and yellow brushstrokes. The top has a yellow and red horizontal band.

# LARS GRAUGAARD

Engage and Share

Grup Instrumental de València  
Joan Cerveró

KAIROS



## LARS GRAUGAARD (\*1957)

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 1 Engage and Share (2014)<br>for sinfonietta | 13:58 |
| 2 Slonk (2017)<br>for sinfonietta            | 16:23 |
| 3 Blind Lemon (2013)<br>for sinfonietta      | 12:09 |

TT 42:40

Grup Instrumental de València  
Joan Cerveró *conductor*

1 2 3 Commissioned by Grup Instrumental de València, Joan Cerveró and commission supported by the Danish Arts Foundation

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DANISH ARTS FOUNDATION



### Grup Instrumental de València

José María Sáez-Ferriz *flute, piccolo, bass flute*  
Javier Guna *english horn, oboe*  
José Cerveró *clarinet, bass clarinet*  
Héctor Soler *bassoon*  
Juan José Llimerà *french horn*  
Vicente Campos *trumpet*  
Salvador Tarrasó *trombone*  
Carlos Peiró *percussion*  
Luís Marzal *percussion*  
Carlos Apellániz *piano*  
Valentina Casades *harp*  
Mari Carmen Antequera *violin*  
Miquel Morera *violin*  
Francesc Gaya *viola*  
Laura Gómez *cello*  
María Ruiz *bass*

Recording venue: Palau de la Música, València

Recording dates: 23–25 June 2017

Sound engineer: Bertram Kornacher

Editing: Bertram Kornacher, Lars Graugaard

Executive producer: Lars Graugaard

Mastering: Bertram Kornacher, Lars Graugaard

Consultant to Lars Graugaard: Gudni Franzson

Production: Vicent Alberola Vidal

Recording supervisor: Lars Graugaard

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## Gudni Franzson about Lars Graugaard

It was back in the early 1990s when Lars Graugaard quite unexpectedly showed up in our life. I had been active as a founder, clarinetist and later conductor of Caput Ensemble since the late 80s, and we were taking our first steps out of our northern island and onto the European continent. Lars had for some time been an active flute player, baroque/classical, playing mainly the standard flute on a very high level with recitals and recordings, but still developing as a composer, organising contemporary music concerts at Danish National Radio's concert hall and elsewhere, if I remember correctly. We had the woodwind and the burning desire for musical creations in common, so we immediately connected. Like many flute players, Lars is a vivid person, a fast thinker and incredibly efficient craftsman. Sometimes he is so productive that it feels like a whole army of people has been involved in a few days' work of his. He can run large scale productions, lead societies and manage festivals at the same time as he is writing and creating a highly sophisticated work of art, reading the most demanding scientific papers or braving the code of a highly complex philosophical riddle.

He is constantly focused and smiling, without a single drop of sweat – albeit his hair clearly losing colour. I dare say that the repertoire Caput was playing during the period we met Lars, young Italian compos-

ers such as Fausto Romitelli and Riccardo Nova, had quite some influence on his music. We went on a tour to Scandinavia and Italy in 1994 with music by, at the time, young Nordic and Italian composers. Soon after Lars wrote his first piece for Caput: *Black Walls* that was clearly inspired by the Italians but with the flow, motion and expression that always distinguishes his music.

It was like a dam had broken, during the same year he wrote pieces like *Tongues Enrobed*, *Broken Grammar* and later *Body, Legs; Head*. This led us to record a complete CD of Lars' music in the autumn of 1996, published by Classico Records in Denmark. Next project Caput was involved with Lars was *Tears of Dionysius*. At the time, he had met the choreographer Thomas Hejlesen, an exceptional stage artist, and together they came up with an extravagant concept for a production based on Nietzsche's essay *Ge-burt der Tragödie*, woven into the Japanese tea ceremony, topped with digital reworking of rather hard porn footage from the 1920 to the 1940s, for performance by an extended sinfonietta and reciter. Caput recorded the music in 2005 and performed the piece live at Reykjavik Arts Festival in 2006 with the Finnish Swedish-speaking actress Stina Ekblad and the rather provocative film. To cut it short, the whole production was considered a scandal! The cultural elite was offended, and no-one wanted to publish the piece until quite recently. When it was released by re-new records, and distributed on Amazon with a 16-year age-restriction. In my view, *Tears of Dionysius* is a masterpiece the world has yet to discover. During the first years of this century, I did not hear so much from Lars, he had entered a new phase. After this silent period,

he told me he had stopped performing on the flute and that he was about to finish his PhD from Oxford Brookes on the artistic and technological challenges of interactive music. This came as a bit of a surprise. I knew he had been trying his hand on computers like so many of us do nowadays, but he had discovered the machine as his new long-term partner, not really for writing score music, which he mostly does with pencil on paper, but as a creative, musical instrument for performance.

I have always felt that music floats totally effortlessly out of Lars' mind and body; in score writing it feels like a stream of thought he is able to put on paper almost instantly. Because of this it comes totally natural for him to create spontaneously in real-time on the computer. Max/MSP and the computer has become his close musical partner, co-composer and mobile performing ensemble. He invites other musicians to join his world by creating along with him, and I have been so fortunate a few times to be a part of this improvised creation, reacting and interacting, leading and mirroring in a totally open musical space.

Reflecting on Lars' music in general, I think it is the sense of form and time that connects all his different approaches and styles. He sets off with a basic idea, material, working method and a clear form. What happens during each section can be kind of casual, yet the direction remains unambiguous, often in linear motion up or down of a homogeneous texture, with espressivo lines that tend to move parallel and often in close intervals, spattered with sharp attacks of unexpected elements that fall like rocks into a floating river.

I tend to experience Lars' music as aimed at all senses, not only for the ears and the brain but also sensing temperature, wet and dry, sometimes smell and even taste is involved. When I listen to his more recent music, played by Grup Instrumental de València, I feel a bit like I am moving on the edge of a cliff by the ocean; it can be quite windy, heavy blowing with powerful waves, but in between we have a valley where it is calm and peaceful. Sometimes the cliff is high and menacing and you feel the gaping fall with all its anxiety, then moving along the coastline you approach sea level where it is no longer so frightening. The musical material tends to develop from motivic fragments on a horizontal scale into expressive melodies never literal and seldom in clear lines, but as an ocean of threads that appear to the listener as the texture of a woven blanket blowing incessantly. We have melodies as threads that slowly ascend or descend over a rather long distance, such as towards the end of *Engage and Share* and we have birdlike clouds that move rapidly in close harmony. On a vertical scale, the music is seldom synchronised but floats in time and texture in a certain direction towards a fixed, but never overtly calculated goal. Yet still today, the first part of *Slonk* brings back some rhythmic memories from Lars' earlier pieces; the repeated material in parlando has some heavy accents, well written for all the ensemble's low instruments creates a mumbling situation: dark, powerful and massive waves that gradually develop from somber heaviness into bright calmness and soaring, feather-like white pitches. At times, I feel that Lars works like a filmmaker with black and white material or even classic Film Noir. It is as if his musical approach is more towards a situation where form, lines, light, direction, viewpoints and focus is more important than

specific objects and colours, or in musical terms, melodies and chords. Like the excellent piece *Blind Lemon*, where hints of melodies are regularly disturbed by dissonant, parallel lines that in turn are criss-crossed by still other lines in quite active traffic, but where the road-plan or musical form is so well laid out that each line nevertheless manages to reach its destination without any accidents, despite crossing the railway and several road junctions on the way. Having said this about structure, material and approach, there is one thing concerning Lars' music that I am especially fond of, and that is the expressive aspect of his compositions. We, who studied classical and romantic instrumental music in the 1970s and 80s, were brought up with the romantic players, going for espressivo elements in music, with focus on the structure of a line, how to shape a phrase, start it, build it up, bring it to a high or low point and close it. This background, knowledge and craftsmanship is clearly audible in all of Lars' score music, gives it depth and charges it with emotions. Something extraordinary in the age of repeated patterns? Lars Graugaard has this natural and easy approach to making music. Being born Danish, this is where he started off, but his connections to Chile, Spain and the Romantic world make him just as much of a Latin composer as Nordic or German. His recent spell as Visiting Faculty Artist at New York University has brought him into close connection with a very different musical world, but no matter what situation and media he confronts, it all seems to come effortless and by itself. I am sure he has had to struggle but it never looks like it, always relaxed and smiling, ready for the next challenge, writing score music, improvising with friends and music colleagues or appearing solo and live-deejaying as Lars from Mars.





## Lars Graugaard

Lars Graugaard was born on February 10, 1957, in Copenhagen, Denmark. He finished his degree in flute performance at the Royal Academy of Music in Copenhagen in 1983, and in 2006 was awarded a PhD on the artistic and technological challenges of interactive music from Oxford Brookes University. He taught interactive music at the Carl-Nielsen-Academy of Music, Denmark 1996–2004 and lectured at the Medialogy Department of Aalborg University 2002–2008. Since 2010 he has been a Visiting Faculty Artist at New York University's Steinhardt Department for Music and Performing Arts. He was Artistic Director of ISCM 1996 and Music Chair of ICMC 2007, and Artistic Director of the re-new Digital Arts Festival 2008–2013.

A self-taught composer, he has over 200 score compositions to his credit that range from symphonic, chamber, and solo settings, to vocal, performative and multimedia works including three operas, with performances in Europe, Asia, Australia and the Americas. He moves with ease between rigorous academic constructs in notation and concepts, and street-smart methodologies that embrace improvisation and instant musical production.

His recordings are had on vinyl, CD, DVD and recent digital formats, and reflect this diversity as they – apart from featuring several of his own compositions – range from all the sonatas for flute and harpsichord by J.S. Bach through core repertoire for the classic ISPW digital music system of the 90s, to instant compositions in open-ended recording studio sessions. The recipient of numerous commissions, he favours long-term collaborations which over the years has included the Odense Symphony Orchestra, Denmark 1996–1999, Chilean Chamber Orchestra since 2000, Grup Instrumental de València, Spain 2014–2016, ITOE, Leipzig, Germany 2015–2018, and Caput Ensemble, Iceland 2018–2021.

[www.l--l.dk](http://www.l--l.dk)



## Grup Instrumental de València

The Grup Instrumental de València was formed in 1991 as a flexible orchestral ensemble dedicated to the music of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. Its continued commitment to performances of the highest standard of contemporary music has made it a reference point and indispensable contributor to the novel tendencies in musical creation. It was rewarded for this trajectory in 2005, when it received the Spanish National Music Prize in the area of interpretation, in recognition of its contribution to the music of our time. Today, the Grup is a cornerstone in Spanish music life and regularly performs all over Spain and abroad, at festivals and concert halls in Europe, Asia and the Americas. Formats range from chamber music to orchestra, and while its repertoire includes classical works, it has performed a large number of consecrated composers over the years, including Stockhausen, Webern, Donatoni, Boulez, Xenakis, Ligeti, Schoenberg, and Stravinsky. True to its spirit, the Grup regularly makes incursions into novel combinations of music in combinations with dance, theatre, performance and video art.

[www.grupinstrumental.com](http://www.grupinstrumental.com)





## Joan Cerveró

Joan Cerveró was born 1961 in Manises, Valencia, Spain. Composer and conductor, he received his training at the music conservatories in Valencia, Madrid and Barcelona, finishing his studies at Guildhall School of Music in London, England. Artistic Director of Grup Instrumental de València since 1994, over the years he has premiered numerous compositions, just as he has given Spanish premieres to a great number of works by international composers. In 2006 he directed the world premiere of Mauricio Sotelo's *Dulcinea* at the Royal Theatre in Madrid, as well as other operatic works such as John Cage's *Européras* and *Neither* by Morton Feldman. He was Artistic Director of the València contemporary music festival Ensems from 1996 to 2014, Musical Director of the València Ballet from 2004 to 2009, and he has been Artistic Director of the València Symphony Orchestra since its founding in 1998. He holds a Master's Degree in "Aesthetic and Creativity" and a PhD in Arts from the València Polytechnic University. As a professor at València Polytechnic University he teaches in the master's program in musical composition, electro-acoustic music and video art. He has been a juror at several competitions including Reina Sofia Composition Prize, Spain and Zagreb Biennial/ISCM WMD, Croatia.

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