

**Olav Kielland**  
**CONCERTO GROSSO NORVEGESE, Op. 18**  
*Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra*  
*Olav Kielland, conductor*

OLAV KIELLAND (born 1901) belongs to the extreme national wing of Scandinavian composers; his particular aim is to achieve a synthesis of national folk music and the contemporary musical idiom. In line with this goal is his thorough study of the traditions and techniques of the *hardingfele*, a Norwegian violin with four extra strings, that flourishes in and around the city of Telemark. This instrument has had a strong influence on music of the area, much the same as the lute influenced European instrumental music of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century; the koto guided the direction of Japanese music; to the gamelan colors the music of Indonesia. The *hardingfele* serves as the main source of inspiration for Kielland's *Concerto Grosso Norvegese*.

The four movements of the *Concerto* are all named after forms of Norwegian folk music—*Bruremarsj* (Bridal March), *Springar* (a folk dance), *Kjempevis* (an ancient ballad form) and *Halling* (a dance form resembling the Scottish Highland Fling).

The melodic material of the *Bruremarsj* is contained in a scale consisting of two Lydian tetrachords, with no other two-tonal additions. The *Springar* is written in the so-called "Telemarks rhythm"; the dance is in ternary meter, but each beat has a different metronomic value (MM=100, 108, 160). The *Kjempevis* is based on the noble, ancient melody of "Asmund Fregdagjevar." It is introduced over a characteristic pizzicato accompaniment, which, in the middle section, gives rise to further development typical of the Norwegian "slattern" (a folk-form). From this material, a contrasting melody is introduced and subsequently the lyrical middle section brings in even further contrast. The *Halling* concludes with a fugato over the main theme, in which different contrapuntal effects are used. On the whole, the movements are otherwise mono-thematic, but the material is arranged in such a way that contrast and progression follow a logical line of development, and each movement appears in the finished work as a formally complete, individual unit.

**BJARNE BRUSTAD**  
**SYMFONI NO. 2**  
*Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra*  
*Øivind Fjeldstad, conductor*

BJARNE BRUSTAD (born in 1895) made his debut as a violinist and composer during the First World War. His compositions as this point were influenced by impressionism. In the 1920's, he became interested in the new currents in music, and has since become one of Norway's leading modernists. A pronounced dislike for the overblown pomposity of late-romantic music added enthusiasm to his grasp of the ideas of Stravinsky and Béla Bartók. The result was a bold and complicated rhythm allied to polyphonal effects. By the early 'thirties, he had discovered his own personal mode of expression, though new facets were appearing in his works at the same time. For a time he attempted to unite national and modern characteristics, but this is not apparent in his later period, which includes three full symphonies.

Through his work of many years as a member of an orchestra and his very thorough studies, Brustad has acquired an understanding of the art of instrumentation, a fact which is noticeable in all his works.

Symphony No. 2 was completed in 1951 is written for orchestra, with the special addition of the old high military drum which has been given an important role. The symphony is in three movements with a short, slow introduction.

The first movement has the heading “Fanfare,” a name derived from the brass introduction of the main thematic material. Otherwise, the movement is roughly a sonata form with primary and secondary themes, an unusually rich development, and a free reprise. The second movement consists of a long, string cantilena—a sort of “endless melody”—on which the flute and English horn later embroider. The composer himself has called the movement “a song without words.”

The last movement is a rondo with three episodes built on the characteristic traits of the different groups of instruments: the fast, vivacious movement of the woodwind, the violent outbursts of the brass and the pizzicato effects of the strings. At the first performance of the symphony, the composer said of this movement: “It is a variable rondo in a breathless tempo, in which the change-over to a more tranquil part can lead the mind back to a less restless time, a more primitive milieu, very different from the present day. And then the chase continues, helter-skelter...”

*Unlike most American orchestras, the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra engages its seventy permanent members on a year-round basis, with paid vacations as well as other benefits. Founded in 1919, an annual average of 120 concerts is made possible with the aid of government and municipal subsidy. In addition to this and its weekly broadcasts for the Norwegian National Broadcasting Company, tours take the orchestra to the remoter regions of Norway—one of the few instances of live orchestra performance north of the Arctic Circle.*

*(Original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)*