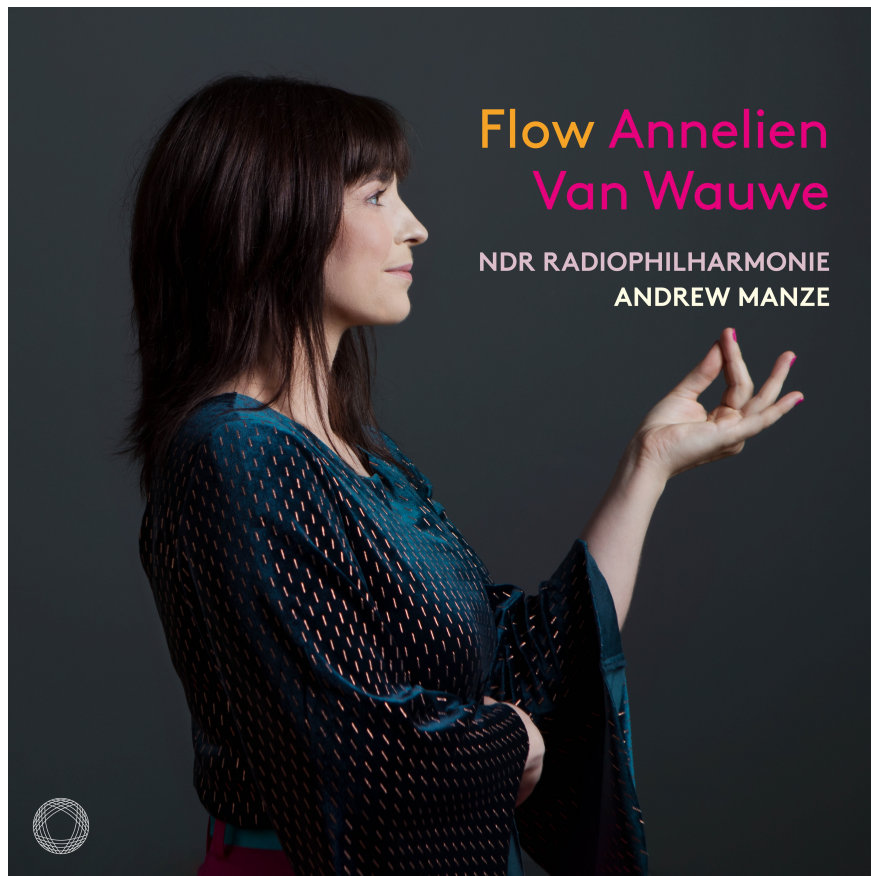


WIM HENDERICKX: SUTRA (2021)

concerto for basset clarinet, orchestra and (optional) electronics
Dedicated to Annelien Van Wauwe



Co-commission BBCRadio3 & Borletti Buitoni Trust 2021

Recorded for Pentatone: November 2021 - NDR Radiophilharmonie / Andrew Manze
World Premiere: 31 March 2022 - BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Martyn Brabbins
Belgian Premiere: 21 September 2022 - NDR Radiophilharmonie / Andrew Manze
Dutch Premiere: 10 January 2023 - Residentieorkest den Haag / Anja Bihlmaier
German Premiere: 3 February 2024 - Dresdner Philharmonie / Andrew Manze

Length: 32 minutes

Scoring: 2 Flutes (2nd also Piccolo), 2 Oboes (2nd also English Horn), 2 Clarinets in Bb, 2 Bassoons (2nd also Contrabassoon), 2 Horns in F (also normal mute), 2 Trumpets (also normal mute, harmon mute, whisper mute) 2 Trombones (also normal mute, plunger, harmon mute), Timpani, Percussion (3 players), Sampler (trigger for the electronics), optional Clarinet solo (amplified if possible), Strings, preferably 12, 10, 8, 6, 4

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Trailer: Sutra Recording: <https://youtu.be/VzFcFr5GMMA>

Video Excerpt world premiere Glasgow: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzFcFr5GMMA>



Henderickx's basset clarinet concerto SUTRA

Wim Henderickx's clarinet concerto SUTRA for basset clarinet in A (or clarinet in A), orchestra and (optional) electronics has been commissioned by BBC Radio 3 and the Borletti-Buitoni Trust. The premiere is planned to take place on 31st of March 2022 with soloist Annelien Van Wauwe and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Martyn Brabbins at the City Halls in Glasgow. SUTRA is dedicated to Annelien Van Wauwe, and has four parts:

I Pranayama: breath of life

II Dhyana: meditation

III Dharana: mind concentration

IV Samadhi: intense spiritual union

Throughout the work, the electronics (developed by Jorrit Tamminga) create a spatial atmosphere, providing resonance between the orchestra and the soloist and unifying the separate parts of the concerto to a whole. With SUTRA Henderickx wishes to go beyond the dimensions of a traditional clarinet concerto. The concerto offers both an intense dialogue between the soloist and the orchestra and creates a profound connection between the performers and the audience through sound vibration.

Sutra

The Yoga Sutras as expounded by the sage Patanjali Maharishi comprise of the first and foremost scriptures of Yoga. It was Patanjali who carefully coordinated Yogic thought and explained it to his students. As he expressed these thoughts, his students jotted them down in a sort of shorthand using just a few words which came to be called the sutras.

The literal meaning of the word 'sutra' is 'thread'; and these sutras are just combinations of words threaded together - usually not even well-formed sentences with subjects, predicates and so on. Within the space of these two hundred short sutras, the entire science of Yoga is clearly delineated: its aim, the necessary practices, the obstacles yogis may meet along the path, their removal, and precise descriptions of the results that will be obtained from such practices.

I Pranayama: breath of life

Pranayama: the practice of controlling the movement of the prana (vital force), usually through control of the breath (the fourth of eight limbs of Ashtanga Yoga)

based on **Yoga Sutra I.34**

प्रच्छर्दनविधारणाभ्यां वा प्राणस्य ॥३४॥

pracchardana-vidharanabhyam va pranasya

"A calm mind is retained by the controlled exhalation or retention of the breath."

Where the mind goes, the prana follows.

If you regulate the prana, you regulate the mind.

Wim Henderickx:

"In SUTRA's first part Pranayama, the breath is musically represented in all its aspects. The music centres around one note (pitch class E) and there are a lot of noise sounds in the orchestra (sighing woodwinds, brass players blowing air in their instruments, strings bowing on the bridges of their instruments, etc.). These noises, together with a colourful use of diverse percussion instruments, create a mysterious atmosphere. Gradually the noise becomes pitch with a very clear focus on certain pitch centres. After this long orchestral introduction, the soloist joins the orchestra by playing mysterious melodies in the low register with an unpronounced sound. Several orchestral solo-instruments continuously dialogue with the solo bass clarinet, and the solo part explores various registers of the instrument. Towards the end of the movement, outbursts of sound establish a contrast to the more intimate atmosphere of the movement. The soloist and some of the orchestra members recite the word 'Pranayama' as if it would be a mantra."

II Dhyana: meditation

Dhyana: meditation (the 7th of the eight limbs of Ashtanga Yoga)

based on **Yoga Sutra III.2**

तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानता ध्यानम् ॥२॥

tatra pratyaya-ikatānatā dhyānam

"Dhyana is the continuous flow of attention towards an object."

Dhyana is the state where psychological and chronological time stops and allows the mind to take stock of behaviour. Developing the intensity of the attention brings the field of consciousness as a stabilised current or flow. Meditation is possible only when the mind is free from attachment.

Wim Henderickx:

"The second movement Dhyana introduces a meditative atmosphere, using various types of bell sounds. The basset clarinet expresses this meditative state through free, arabesque-like phrases that lead into a section during which a large, sustained chord is gradually built up by the orchestra. The chord eventually resolves into multi-phonics in the basset clarinet. The next passage focusses on the vibraphone and the marimba and is inspired by gamelan music. The basset clarinet reacts to it with short lively gestures and the woodwinds create a texture inspired by birdsongs. The end of Dhyana brings us back to the opening atmosphere of the movement with the woodwinds whispering the word 'Dharana' as a harbinger of the third part."

III Dharana: mind concentration

Dharana: concentration (the sixth of eight limbs of Asthanga Yoga)

based on **Yoga Sutra III.1**

देशबन्धश्चित्तस्य धारणा॥१॥

deśa-bandhaḥ cittasya dhāraṇā

"Dharana is the binding of the mind to one place, object or idea."

The 6th limb of yoga, Dharana, stresses the elimination of fluctuations and disturbances in the mental state in order to develop a single-pointed concentration. In Dharana the mind is trained. Concentration is the beginning of meditation; meditation is the culmination of concentration. They are inseparable.

Wim Henderickx:

"The third part is an explosive, energetic movement with measure changes and rhythmical gestures. In this virtuoso movement, the basset clarinet dialogues with the entire orchestra. The first section has a call-and-response structure. In the second section, the timpani and the lower instruments of the orchestra present an ear-catching ostinato. The basset clarinet part is virtuosic and uses all the registers of the instrument. A repetition of the first section leads into a cadenza for the basset clarinet and electronics. The cadenza is followed by a passage with basset clarinet, timpani and tablas (Indian kettle drums). An abrupt and loud passage by the brass instruments transits into the last section of this movement with a virtuosic outburst of the basset clarinet, supported by percussive chords in the orchestra."

IV Samadhi: intense spiritual union

Samadhi: contemplation, superconscious state, absorption (the eighth and final limb or culmination of the eight limbs of Ashtanga Yoga).

based on Yoga Sutra III.3

तदेवार्थमात्रनिर्भासं स्वरूपशून्यमिव समाधिः

tadeva-artha-mātra-nirbhāsaṁ svarūpa-śūnyam-iva-samādhīḥ

“Samadhi is the process of a sustained concentration, completely absorbing the concentrator such that the concentrator and the object become one.”

Samadhi (Sanskrit: “total self-collectedness”) is the highest state of mental concentration that people can achieve while still bound to the body. It unites them with the highest reality. It is said to be a liberated state.

Wim Henderickx:

“The fourth and last movement Samadhi is a relaxation, bringing peace and rest. The harp motive is the foundation of the entire movement. The music offers a sequence of variations, with several soli from the orchestra (viola, horn, oboe and violins) dialoguing with the basset clarinet. At the end of this melancholic movement, the concerto transforms into an ethereal coda. Glissandi in the strings and noises in the brass generate a soundscape that provides the backdrop for the closing melody of the basset clarinet. Repetitive, morse-like gestures announce the end of the concerto. Woodwinds sigh and the brass and string sections chant the famous mantra ‘Om mani padme hum’. A final melody, sung by the soloist, dissolves into atmospheric electronic sounds.”



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