

## Reflections on the recording of *Carousel* by Daniel Berg

In December 2016 and June 2017, I recorded *Carousel* together with Fredrik Duvling. The LP, and CD, was recorded in Studio Marten, Mölndal. Sound engineer was Peter Axelsson and produced by Jörgen Olofsson and Marten Recordings. Photographer was Per T Buhre and the graphic design was made by Lars Olofsson. The CD was released in February 2018 (and the LP will be released in spring 2019).

The artistic challenge was:

1. How can the joy of playing and the pleasure of making music be present through a recording?
2. What program on a recording can present a percussion duo?

1992 I started the percussion duo Rhythm Art Duo together with Fredrik Duvling. 25 years later I wanted to document some of our favorites on a recording. One of our focus has always been the joy and the pleasure of playing music together and therefore it was also very important for us to find this feeling when we record. When I met the sound engineer Peter Axelsson he suggested to record with only two microphones, like a human ear. In the studio we tried different reverberation and finally resolved around two seconds of reverberation. We also tried to play live, without too many cuttings, and choose the takes with what we think sounds most like a live performance. I think we found a good mixture - microphones, studio, reverberation and music energy that all gives a feeling of a live concert in the listener's living room.

A mixture of classical pieces, arranged music and some new works written direct for us by Swedish composers was present for the producer at Marten. *Carousel*, written by two virtuoso musicians David Friedman & Dave Samuels, became the title of our record. The classical piece for vibraphone and marimba contains a very rhythmical pattern with a lot of improvisations. Photographer Per T Buhre took a photo with a lot of energy and Lars Olofsson caught this feeling when he made the graphic design. Another very fun and virtuoso classical piece for percussion is *First Concerto for Flute and Percussion* by American composer Lou Harrison. We asked some Swedish composers to write pieces in this spirit and Maria Löfberg, Anders Åstrand and Miklós Maros were all inspired and wrote new pieces for us.

To balance this program of joy we also needed some deeper music with more rest and reflection to get a contrast and because of that we found out that the faster pieces perceived even more virtuoso! Therefore, we also recorded *Forever and Sunsmell*, for a singer and two percussion players, by John Cage and *Rain Tree* by Tôru Takemitsu. At last I wrote a piece with a try to catch the atmosphere on the record. Our sound engineer Peter Axelson is an excellent jazz bass player and together with him we end the record with my *Night in June*.

Finally, we had a program I think present a percussion duo in the best way – classics, new music, some arrangements, improvisation and a piece by our own. I also think the choice and the blend of music gives the impression of the joy with music. The photo by Per T Buhre, the graphic design by Lars Olofsson and the live recording by Peter Axelson reinforced our idea of presenting the pleasure of plying together - through a recording.

