

Biography - Emil Jonason, clarinet

Emil Jonason (b. 1983) was born and raised on Värmdö outside Stockholm. He started playing clarinet in the municipal music school at the age of 10 - the instrument which back then had the shortest waiting list. With a father who was an amateur jazz clarinetist, he listened early on to world-famous names such as Benny Goodman, Sidney Bechet, Kenny Davern and especially the notorious Spike Jones and his City Slickers.

After a couple of years, he started in the music school's Jazz Ensemble and soon learned to improvise, at the same time as he began to discover classical music. During his high school years at Södra Latin's Professional Musician line, he played in both symphony orchestra / big band and chamber music / jazz ensemble. During the same period he toured in Sweden and Poland and the Czech Republic with various Klezmer / Balkan groups.

At the age of 17, he was accepted to the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm, and has since studied for Hermann Stefánsson, Martin Fröst, Kjell-Inge Stevansson and Yehuda Gilad. He won the Solofoni competition in Helsingborg at the age of 21, performed Nielsen's clarinet concerto with the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra, and at his diploma concert in 2008 he played John Corigliano's clarinet concerto together with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in Stockholm.

In the 2009/10 season, he was elected *Rising Star* by the *European Concert Hall Organization*, which led to invitations from Europe's major stages such as the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Vienna Musikverein, Cité de la Musique in Paris, Hamburg Laeishalle, L'Auditori in Barcelona and many more. He toured with pianist Peter Friis Johansson, a friend since high school, and the two have played concerts together hundreds of times over the years.

At the 2012 Nobel Prize Awards, Emil appeared as a soloist in live TV worldwide, and the following year he was invited by conductor Marin Alsop to the esteemed *Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music* in Santa Cruz, U.S.A. During the same autumn, he premiered Christian Lindberg's clarinet concerto "*The Erratic Dreams of Mr Grönstedt*" together with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, a work that Emil then played numerous times around Sweden, Germany, Great Britain, Finland, Latvia and also recorded in 2017 (BIS Records).

Emil has been described in the Swedish, European and American press as "*The Clarinet's Yngwie Malmsteen*", "*Has the aura of a Rockstar*", "*Raises the bar for what you can expect from a clarinet*" and as "*A magician who uses his instrument that breaks classical norms like a silver bullet*". He has played as a soloist with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, Musica

Vitae, Düsseldorfer Symphoniker, Weimar Staatskapelle, Cabrillo Festival Orchestra in the USA, Symphony Orchestra Vlaanderen and many more in Sweden and abroad.

In 2019, Emil won the *Kaleidoscope International Vocal and Instrumental Competition* in Los Angeles, USA. From over 1,600 applicants from all over the world, Emil was chosen to play Emmy Lindström's clarinet concerto at the finals, and emerged victorious. He was the only clarinetist, and Emmy's concerto was the only contemporary piece of music selected for the finals.

Emil also works as a teacher at the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm, and at the Music and Opera Academy, at Mälardalen University in Västerås.