

# Public Secret

Et videooratorium

*A Video Oratorio*



## Når livet synger

### *When life sings*

af/by Lars Movin

Stemme. Ansigt. Erindring. Tid.

Et videooratorium kalder Jacob F. Schokking **Public Secret**. Et oratorium er et dramatisk musikværk for solostemmer, kor og orkester, som regel med religiøs tekst.

I **Public Secret** høres en række solostemmer, mænd og kvinder, trænede og utrænede, improviserede og melodisatte. En kakofoni - ikke et kor - af enkeltstemmer, der væver sig ind i hinanden til en sang om stort og småt. Vidt forskellige fragmenter blander sig i processionen af ord, der skrider frem i en fælles musikalsk og visuel iscenesættelse. Stumper af erindringer blander sig i nu'et, og nu'ets inspiration puster glød i erindringsbillederne. Det er selve livet, der synger.

Iscenesætteren Schokking har bedt to mænd - Norman M. Shine og Carl Sch. Nørrested - om i improviseret form at synge deres erindringer til et videokamera. En usædvanlig opfordring, der lokker de to midaldrende mænd til at hente intime minder og små hemmeligheder frem i lyset. Det private bliver offentligt - *public secrets*.

Shine synger på engelsk i letflydende forløb, med humor og underfundighed, som en



Voice. Face. Recollection. Time.

A video oratorio is what Jacob F. Schokking calls **Public Secret**. An oratorio is a dramatic musical work for soloists, choir and orchestra, usually to a religious text.

In **Public Secret** we hear a series of solo voices, men and women, schooled and unschooled, improvised and composed. A cacophony not a choir of individual voices which interweave to form a song about things great and small. Widely differing fragments blend in a procession of words which proceeds in a shared musical, visual staging. Fragments of recollections blend with the now, and the inspiration of the now fans the embers of the images of recollection. Life itself is singing.

Schokking asked two men Norman M. Shine and Carl Sch. Nørrested to sing their memories in improvised form in front of a video camera. An unusual challenge which enticed the two men into bringing intimate memories and little secrets to light. The private becomes public public secrets.

Shine sings in easily flowing English, with humour and subtlety, like a bird proud of its song. Nørrested sings in Danish, he is more reticent, but erupts in tiny exclamations like



fugl, der er stolt af sin sang. Nørrested synger på dansk, han er mere tilbageholdende, men giver slip i små udbrud, som en høne, der finder et korn.

Tilsammen bygger de en konstruktion af refleksioner over almenmenneskelige temaer - forfængelighed, kærlighed, ensomhed og død.

De to mænds sungne og improviserede refleksioner og anekdoter modsvarer af en tredje orator, en professionel kvindelig sopran, Mariola Mainka, der synger en skrevet libretto baseret på Marcel Duchamps *ready made*-tekst *Men in Front of the Mirror*. Bag solisterne kommenterer et firestemmig kor de temaer omkring mænds forfængelighed og refleksioner over mødet med spejlbilledet, som dukker op i de tre stemmer, især hos Shine og Duchamp.

Ansigt. Erindring. Tid. Stemme.

Det er livets materiale, der holdes frem. Ansigterne er helt tæt på, nøgne landskaber af levet liv. Tiden går for øjnene af os. Sangen holder de syngendes koncentration i skak. De glemmer at se ud, når de synger. Eller de glemmer at kontrollere stemmen,



*a chicken that has come across a grain of corn.*

*Together they build an edifice of reflections on everyday themes vanity, love, loneliness and death.*

*Their sung, improvised reflections and anecdotes are countered by a third orator, a woman, a professional soprano, Mariola Mainka, who sings a libretto based on Marcel Duchamp's "ready made" text Men in Front of the Mirror. Behind the soloists a four part choir comments on the themes of male vanity and reflections upon the encounter with the mirror image that appear in the three soloists, particularly in the words of Shine and Duchamp.*

*Face. Recollection. Time. Voice.*

*The material of life is proffered. The faces are in ultra close up, naked landscapes of life lived. Time passes before our very eyes. The song keeps the concentration of the singers in check. They forget to look outwards while they are singing. Or they forget to control*

når de vil se ud. Under alle omstændigheder glemmer de, mens de husker.

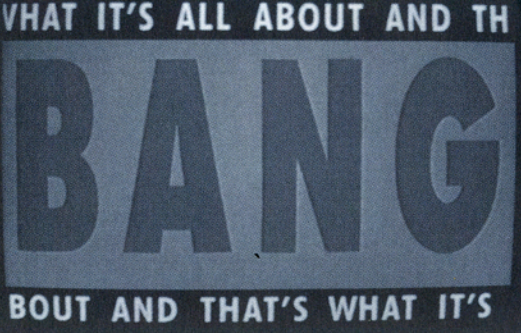
Ordene forlader munden som bær på en stilk, der langsomt trækkes ud af et mørke, hvor man troede, at intet groede. Materialet er alt det, der er gået forud for øjeblikket. Det er usynligt for andre, når de syngende tier, men i sangen bliver det til billeder. Fortiden bliver stoflig.

Når først man er begyndt at trække i stilkene, kommer hvad som helst frem i lyset. Grinagtigt og smertefuldt, anekdotisk og filosofisk, spøjst og alment. Shine giftede sig med sin første kæreste for at komme i seng med hende. "Du kan altid blive skilt," tænkte han. Skilsmissen tog atten år. Nørrested skød sin bedstemors kanariefugl ned fra pinden med en vandslange. Den kravlede op igen, men han blev ved, til den blev liggende.

Minderne gør noget ved ansigterne, når de fortælles. Fortiden er til stede i nu'et.

Erindring. Tid. Stemme. Ansigt.

Livet er helligt. At studere dets bestanddele er ikke at studere dets helhed. Men vi kan ikke andet. Vi kan holde detaljerne



*their voices when they want to look outwards. In any case, they forget as they recall.*

*The words leave their lips like berries on stalks, slowly drawn out of a darkness where one thought nothing grew. The material is everything that preceded the now. It is invisible to others when the singers are mute, but in their song it becomes images. The past becomes tangible.*

*Once one begins pulling at the stalk, anything may emerge into the light. Ridiculous and painful, anecdotal and philosophical, quaint and ordinary. Shine married his first girlfriend in order to sleep with her. "You can always get a divorce", he thought. The divorce took eighteen years. Nørrested shot his granny's canary off its perch with the garden hose. It fluttered back up again, but he persisted until it remained prone.*

*The recollections do something to the faces as they are recounted. The past is present in the now.*

*Recollection. Time. Voice. Face.*

*Life is sacred. Studying its component parts is not the same as studying its entirety. But we can do no more. We can direct our magnifying*



## AND DOWNSTAIRS

under lup. Isolere fænomenerne og håbe, at de vil afsløre en del af hemmeligheden. En kaffekop på et køkkenbord. Fornemmelsen af håndens hud mod den uldne frakkelomme. En drøm om et tordenvejr, der viste sig at være malet på et scenetæppe. Det hører altsammen med, men der er altid mere. At studere en nøgen kvinde kan lære os noget om anatomi, men ikke om kærlighed.

Tid. Stemme. Ansigt. Erindring.

Ansigtet i spejlet. Hvordan kan vi se, hvad andre ser? Hvis ikke vi kan se os selv, som andre ser os, lever vi på en ø.

Ansigtet er sjælens spejl, siger man. Alligevel gemmer det på en hemmelighed. Når ansigtet synger, viser det en flig af det skjulte. Vi studerer disse ansigter og leder efter noget, som sangen ikke fortæller. Vi lytter til sangen og håber at høre noget, ordene ikke kan rumme. Vi hører ordene og møder os selv.

Vi lever på en ø. Men skibet er opfundet.

*glasses at the details. Isolate phenomena and hope they will reveal some of the secret. A coffee cup on a kitchen counter. The sense of the skin of a hand on the fluffy coat pocket. A dream of thunder that proved to be painted on a backdrop. All these things belong, but there is always more besides. Studying a naked woman may teach us about anatomy, but not about love.*

*Time. Voice. Face. Recollection.*

*The face in the mirror. How can we see what others see? If we cannot see ourselves as others see us, we are living on an island.*

*The face is the mirror of the soul, so it is said. Yet it conceals a secret. When the face sings, it shows a corner of what is hidden. We study these faces and search for something the song does not reveal. We listen to the song and hope to hear something the words cannot encompass. We hear the words and encounter ourselves.*

*We are living on an island. But the ship has been invented.*

## Public Secret

Et videooratorium  
i 6 dele:

*into the camera  
first mirror  
love  
second mirror  
death  
out of the mirror*

### Stemmer:

Norman, dokumentar recitativ

Carl, dokumentar recitativ

Sopran

Vokal kvartet

### Med elektronisk akkompagnement

af Jan Goorissen

### Originaltekster af:

Marcel Duchamp (Men before the mirror)

Norman Shine

Carl Nørrested

### Libretto:

Ane Mette Ruge & Jacob F. Schokking

*A Video Oratorio  
in 6 parts:*

*into the camera  
first mirror  
love  
second mirror  
death  
out of the mirror*

### Voices:

Norman, dokumentary recitativo

Carl, dokumentary recitativo

Soprano

Vocal quartet

### With electronic instrumentation

by Jan Goorissen

### Original text material by:

Marcel Duchamp (Men before the mirror)

Norman Shine

Carl Nørrested

### Script by:

Ane Mette Ruge & Jacob F. Schokking

## into the camera

### **NORMAN:**

Memories, memories

Finding my way back  
to the present

When I look into the camera  
I see myself backwards  
round the other way  
the left is on the right  
the right is on the left

How can we see ourselves as others see us?  
We have to  
otherwise we have to live on the little little island  
all by ourselves, that's where we live

### **NORMAN:**

5 minutes here, 5 minutes there  
but all adding up  
to no longer having secrets from myself

they're terrible secrets to have

## first mirror

### **SOPRANO:**

Many a time the mirror imprisons them  
and holds them firmly.  
Fascinated they stand in front.  
They are absorbed,  
seperated from reality  
and alone with their dearest vice, vanity.  
However readily they spread out all other vices for all,  
they keep this one secret and disown it  
even before their most intimate friends.

### **SOPRANO:**

There they stand and stare  
at the landscape which is themselves,  
the mountains of their noses,  
the defiles and folds of their shoulders, hands and skin,  
to which the years have already so accustomed them  
that they no longer know how they evolved;  
and the multiple primeval forests  
of their hair.

### **CHOIR:**

The left is on the right  
the right is on the left

How can we see ourselves as others see us?  
We have to  
otherwise we have to live on the little little island  
all by ourselves, that's where we live

### **CHOIR:**

However readily they spread out all other vices for all,  
they keep this one secret and disown it  
even before their most intimate friends.

### **CHOIR:**

They meditate, they are content,  
they try to take themselves in as a whole.

## love

### **NORMAN:**

And she bought me a book: Ivanhoe  
and that was the first book I really enjoyed

I always identified with the heroes  
I went in, I was Ivanhoe

### **Chivalry**

I always got the nice girls  
when I was at school  
The nice girls always wanted to talk to me  
and so I heard all their secrets  
and I kept my secrets to myself  
together with my lustful thoughts  
which were pure feeling

### **NORMAN:**

And I think I had my first lustful thoughts  
but they are not thoughts anymore  
just a picture of Marjory demurely sitting  
so we could all look at her  
She sat so still  
and I sat still and I looked at her  
That was the first time  
I ever dared look at a woman

### **NORMAN:**

And so I fell in love  
with Marjory Bacon  
I didn't like the Bacon  
but I liked the Marjory  
and she sat so still  
and she crossed her legs demurely  
and she was very very beautiful

### **NORMAN:**

And so I was a virgin until I was 22  
That's a long time to be a virgin  
when you have lustful thoughts  
and no feelings

### **SOPRANO & CHOIR (women):**

And we held hands  
And we held hands

And that was how life was  
and the rest was inside  
for dreaming

### **CHOIR (men):**

And we had to look at her  
we had to look at her very carefully  
so that we could draw her arms in the right place  
and her legs in the right place

### **CHOIR (men):**

And we had to look at her  
we had to look at her very carefully  
so that we could draw her arms in the right place  
and her legs in the right place

### **CHOIR (men):**

And we had to look at her  
we had to look at her very carefully  
so that we could draw her arms in the right place  
and her legs in the right place

And I learned to look at women  
as they were, breasts and all

### **CHOIR (men):**

It's difficult to find the feelings from then  
they all disappear  
like the morning dew

**Duet**

**NORMAN:**  
and that's what it's all about  
that's what it's all about, bang!  
you put your left foot in  
you put your right foot out  
wiggle it all about

that's what it is all about  
remember the past

**NORMAN:**  
When I proposed  
to my first wife  
it was not very idyllic  
because I had the thought:

**NORMAN:**  
The divorce took 18 years  
it was called marriage

**NORMAN:**  
He did what he wanted

We used to say of father that he was temperamental  
50% temper and 50% mental

And my mother couldn't understand him  
And so they shouted and screamed to each other

**NORMAN:**  
But my father could do things  
And I can see him  
He didn't like the sofa  
so he took the kitchen knife  
and slashed the sofa  
first one way, then the other

And we were in the kitchen  
and my mother and he  
are shouting and screaming  
but my father could do something

**NORMAN:**  
One shelf after the other  
all the porcelain on the floor  
with a crash  
And then he stopped and looked at my mother  
Did she understand him now?  
No, so he found a little shelf  
the last porcelain  
crash, just a little crash

It worked, my mother stopped screaming

**CHOIR (men):**  
and that's what it's all about  
that's what it's all about, bang!  
you put your left foot in  
you put your right foot out  
wiggle it all about

**CHOIR (men):**  
"Well, you won't get into bed with her  
unless you marry her  
but you can always get a divorce"

**CHOIR (men):**  
But my father could do things  
could do things  
He did what he wanted

**CHOIR (men):**  
But my father could do things  
could do things  
He did what he wanted

**CHOIR (men):**  
But my father could do things  
could do things  
He did what he wanted

**CHOIR (men):**  
My father could do things  
could do things  
He did what he wanted

**NORMAN:**  
Where did the cups come from?  
We had cups

**NORMAN:**  
When I look back  
and I see all these funny people outside me  
Where did they come from?  
What's it got to do with me?

**Duet**

**NORMAN:**  
Only when I can see a face  
looking at me  
saying nothing, just looking  
and I can look, nothing said  
I can see these faces  
and that was love

**SOPRANO:**  
Only when I can see a face  
looking at me  
saying nothing, just looking  
and I can look, nothing said  
I can see these faces  
and that was love

**second mirror**

**SOPRANO:**  
Women have taught them  
that power does not succeed.  
Women have told them  
what is attractive in them,  
they have forgotten;  
but now they put themselves together  
like a mosaic out of what pleased women in them.  
For they themselves do not know  
what is attractive about them.

Only handsome men  
are sure of themselves  
but handsome men  
are not fitted for love:  
they wonder even at the last moment  
whether it suits them.

**SOPRANO:**  
Fitted for love are the great ugly things  
that carry their faces with pride before them  
like a mask.  
The great taciturns,  
who behind their silence  
hide much or nothing.

**HOIR:**  
Fitted for love are the great ugly things  
that carry their faces with pride before them  
like a mask.  
The great taciturns,  
who behind their silence  
hide much or nothing.

## death

### NORMAN:

Memories, memories  
What can I remember?

### NORMAN:

When I look into my past  
and I think of my father and my mother  
My mother was a big woman  
strong arms  
She used to say:  
"If you're not good, I will give you the blow of death!"  
And I used to think  
she is going to go: "phhhh", at me  
and I'll be dead

### NORMAN:

That's why I suppose  
everybody likes Peter Pan

### NORMAN:

You can fly through time  
You can fly through space

### NORMAN:

If I fly through time backwards  
and close my eyes  
and I am everywhere

### CARL:

Mens mit barndomshjem var nutid  
var min mormors hus altid datid  
Mine, min morfar  
der var en verdenskendt skuespiller  
efterlod ligesom en fuldstændig lukning af tid  
da han døde

Så alt stod som da Mesteren  
så at sige, havde forladt det  
Og hans skygge hvilede  
sådan at, både sønnen og moderen  
i al evighed herefter  
blev forbundet, fastlænket  
til dette hus

### CHOIR:

Memories, memories  
What can I remember?

### SOPRANO:

It's so easy  
flying  
upstairs and downstairs

### SOPRANO:

It is easy to fly  
when you close your eyes

### SOPRANO:

It is easy to fly  
when you close your eyes

You can fly through time  
You can fly through space

### choir:

When the home of my childhood was the present  
my grandmother's home always was the past  
My grandfather  
who had been a worldfamous actor  
left behind him a complete closure of time  
when he died

So everything stood as the Master  
so to say, had left it  
And his shadow lingered  
so both son and mother  
for ever and ever  
were tied and chained  
to this house

### SOPRANO:

It is easy to fly  
when you close your eyes

You can fly through time  
You can fly through space

### NORMAN:

but I used to fall  
I could fly so high  
and then I had no wings

### CARL:

En varm dag  
stod jeg og vandede vinterhaven  
med haveslangen  
en af de haveslanger  
hvor man kunne regulere  
løbet fra en stor spredt vifte  
til en tynd stråle

Jeg husker  
jeg ændret viften  
til en samlet koncentreret stråle  
og jaged den lige i buret  
så fuglen dratted af pinden  
og faldt våd ned på gulvet

Den hoppede glad op igen  
og sådan blev vi ved en tid  
men pokker mig om den  
den pludseligt ikke kunne opleve  
at nu syntes den  
dæleme, huleme ikke dette var sjovt længere

Der kom en satan op i mig  
jeg blev ved  
og med det resultat  
at den stakkels fugl døde

### NORMAN:

You were unwanted

And it is true  
nobody wanted me  
but it didn't bother me  
because I didn't want me either

### NORMAN:

So I dreamt of going through the streets  
sweeping up the rubbish  
and finding funny things

Dreaming wasn't only at night  
Dreaming was during the day too

### CHOIR:

In my grandmother's house  
all through my childhood  
a poor canary bird sang  
for my old grandmother  
who sat in her chair, humming

I felt some compassion for this bird  
which had to entertain her  
all day long

### CHOIR:

One warm day  
I was watering the wintergarden  
with a hose  
one of those  
that can be regulated  
from a wide fan  
to a piercing jet of water

I remember  
I changed it from a fan  
into a concentrated jet  
which I pointed right into the cage  
so the bird tumbled of it's peg  
onto the floor, all wet

It merrily jumped up again  
and thus we continued for a while  
but I'll be damned, suddenly  
it couldn't see the fun of it  
anymore

A devil came up in me  
I kept it up  
as a result  
the poor bird died

### CHOIR:

Nobody knew who I was  
I didn't know who I was  
I didn't want to know who I was

**NORMAN:**

I could find the most wonderful things  
I found things in the street  
I wandered after the man sweeping the street  
and he used to give me things  
and I gave him things

I think he knew who I was

**SOPRANO:**

If I fly through time backwards  
and close my eyes  
and I am everywhere

but I used to fall  
I could fly so high  
and then I had no wings

**CARL:**

Jeg kan  
Jeg kan huske en drøm  
fra min barndom

Lige i det  
at vi legede, i haven  
blev det hele pludseligt mørkt  
Det blev tordenvej

**CARL:**

men midt i uvejret opdagede jeg

**CHOIR:**

Waking, sleeping  
When are we awake  
When are we asleep

We can go in and out

**CHOIR:**

The left is on the right  
the right is on the left

**CHOIR:**

You can fly through time  
You can fly through space

**NORMAN:**

I can remember the bombs  
It was a nasty sound  
Vroom, vroom, vroom, vroom

I can

I can remember a dream  
from my childhood

Just when  
we were playing, in the garden  
it suddenly became dark  
it started to thunder

**NORMAN:**

and then one day  
one cut out  
and we knew it was coming our way  
and there we were all happy in the shelter  
and we knew it would go over our shelter  
and land in the park  
and we were so happy

It didn't land on the park  
it hit the tree above the shelter  
and we were lucky  
all the blast went past us  
my brother got a bloody nose  
and I was not unhappy  
I wanted to give my brother  
a bloody nose for a long time  
and I remember

I thanked Hitler for doing it for me  
until we came out of the shelter  
and we saw all the people  
being brought out of the shelter  
and many ambulances  
and many people crying  
and I looked at Sis  
and she started crying  
so I could start crying too

at tordenvejret havde kun 2 dimensioner

Det var ikke plastisk  
lynene var malet på et bagtæppe  
og pludseligt blev det hele rullet op

Aha, sagde jeg, OK  
så er der en iscenesætter

**out of the mirror****SOPRANO**

Slim hands with long fingers  
or short, that grasp forth.  
The nape of a neck  
that rises steeply  
to lose itself in the forest's edge of the hair,  
the tender curve of the skin behind an ear,  
the mysterious mussel of the navel,  
the flat pebbles of the kneecaps,  
the joints of their ankles,  
which a hand envelops  
to hold them back  
from a leap - and beyond  
the farther and still unknown regions  
of the body,  
much older than it,  
much more worn,  
open to all happenings:  
this face, always this face  
which they know so well.

For they have a body only at night  
and most only in the arms of a woman.  
But with them goes always,  
ever present  
their face.

**SOPRANO:**

The mirror looks at them.  
They collect themselves.  
Carefully, as if tying a cravat,  
they compose their features.  
Insolent, serious  
and conscious of their looks  
they turn around  
to face the world.

to face the world.

but in the middle of the thunderstorm  
I discovered it only had to dimensions

It wasn't plastical  
the lightning was painted on a backdrop  
and suddenly it was all rolled up

Aha I said, OK  
this is staged by somebody

**CHOIR:**

the tender curve of the skin behind an ear,  
the mysterious mussel of the navel,  
the flat pebbles of the kneecaps,  
the joints of their ankles,

**CHOIR:**

The mirror looks at them.  
They collect themselves.  
Carefully, as if tying a cravat,  
they compose their features.  
Insolent, serious  
and conscious of their looks  
they turn around  
to face the world.

the end





Medvirkende/*performers*

Model / *model*

Idé og iscenesættelse / *idea & direction*  
i samarbejde med / *in collaboration with*

Musik / *music*

Improviseret tekst / *improvised texts by*

Anden tekst fra / *other texts from*

Dirigent / *conductor*

Vokal kvartet / *vocal quartet*

Elektronisk instrumentering /  
*electronic instrumentation*

Video optagelser / *photography*

AVID forredigering / *AVID editing*

Slutredigering / *on-line editing*

Lyd / *sound recording*

Mix / *studio and mix*

Produktion / *production*

for / *for*

distribution / *distribution*

VIDEONUMMER  
ISBN

Norman Shine  
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Mariola Mainka

Lucy Davis

Jacob F. Schokking  
Ane Mette Ruge

Jan M. Goorissen

Norman Shine  
Carl Sch. Nørrested  
"Men in front of the Mirror"  
Marcel Duchamp

Flemming Windekilde

Tine Gaardsdal  
Helene Gjerris  
Mads Elung-Jensen  
Bo Nanfred

Jan M. Goorissen

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