



BIOGRAPHY

Sissel's rich and varied career has spanned over 20 years. She has performed in front of royalty and heads of state, shared the stage with superstars of every musical genre - classical stars, punks, pop idols and rappers. Highlights include singing the Olympic hymn at the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, representing Norway at the Nobel Peace Prize Gala Concert, and performing at the first Christmas concert in Moscow after the fall of the Soviet Union, invited by the great tenors Placido Domingo and José Carreras. However, this was not the first time they performed together.

Sissel and Domingo first met during the Olympic Games at Lillehammer where they sang the Olympic Theme song together. The recording took place in the TV crew's cafeteria right before the opening ceremony. As a result of that collaboration, Sissel was invited to Domingo's "Christmas in Vienna" together with Charles Aznavour.

Later in 2002, they went on to record 'Ave Maria' from Intermezzo by Mascagni. A year later she recorded another Ave Maria, this time by Schubert, with Welsh bass-baritone Bryn Terfel and a third Ave Maria, solo, for a Japanese car commercial!

Sissel has shared the stage with superstars including Celine Dion, Sting, Moby, Angelic Kidjo, Willie Nelson - she's toured and sung at Carnegie Hall with The Chieftains and appeared twice on David Letterman's talk show in New York, and performed on Good Morning America both alone and with Placido Domingo.

Other collaborators have included pop legend Neil Sedaka, jazz star Diana Krall, Jazz legend Dee Dee Bridgewater and crossover favourite Josh Groban, as well as duets with Danish punk band Sort Sol (Black Sun) and rapper Warren G - the latter producing a hit single across Europe.

Defying labels and categories, she is simply herself - Sissel, a unique artist.

Sissel's music has already touched millions. With a recording repertoire ranging from Schubert and Chopin to Lloyd-Webber and Morricone, Handel and Bach to ABBA and Lord (that's Jon Lord of rockers Deep Purple), Sissel was a crossover artist long before marketing men invented the term.

Sissel Kyrkjebo was born in 1969 in Bergen, gateway to the fjords on Norway's west coast. It's a place where she has always found her muse. "The Norwegian countryside is my inspiration. I am very proud of Norway and its fantastic nature. All

through my childhood we used to go hiking in the mountains every Sunday, whatever the weather.”

When she was only nine Sissel joined a children’s choir under a New Zealand-born conductor, Felicity Laurence, and stayed with them for seven years. “That was my musical education. We sang everything - classical and jazz, folk and even Maori songs. People said we sounded like an angel choir because we had this very clean pure sound, almost like an English boys’ choir.”

At 14, she made her television debut in another choir on a ‘sing along’ program, and went on to become a popular TV performer. Sissel’s biggest break came at the age of 16 when she was invited to sing during the intermission of the 1986 Eurovision Song Contest staged in her hometown of Bergen. Her first album was released the same year and made her a national star overnight. She is now a national institution in Norway and has sung all over the world, selling over six million solo albums since her recording debut.

In 1997, Sissel was asked by composer James Horner to contribute the haunting, ethereal vocal tracks for his soundtrack to ‘Titanic’. About that meeting she said, “I remember the first time I heard the simple lines when James played them for me on the piano. I got goose bumps. I loved it and felt that this music spoke directly to my heart”. That album went on to become the largest selling movie soundtrack in history.

Other movies Sissel has contributed her voice to are the soundtracks of “The Adventures of Pinocchio” (1996), including a duet with Brian May, the Irish drama “Evelyn” (2002), and “Vanity Fair” (2004). She has sung all over the world in Howard Shore’s “Lord of the Rings” Symphony concert tour. Mr. Shore wrote a special piece for her at the very last recording session of the extended version of the trilogy (2007).

When Norway celebrated its 100th anniversary of independence in 2005, Sissel was invited to represent Norway on the longest running program in history “Music and the Spoken Word” recorded with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at the Temple Square.

They invited her back in 2006 as special guest to their annual Christmas show “The Spirit of the Season”. Sissel recalls the return engagement as a 'homecoming'. The recorded result was the concert CD, Spirit of the Season which raced up the Billboard Classical Charts to #1 within 5 weeks of its release. The concert was aired nationwide on PBS right before Christmas 2007 and released as a DVD.

Sissel's newest album, released Nov 6th 2007, (for the time being only in the USA), is called “Northern Lights”. It is a project that she has been dreaming of realizing for a long time; a live recording of a concert at Bergstaden Ziir, a church from the 17th century in Røros, Norway. This spectacular concert is inspired by Norway’s winter and the ‘Blue Hour’ (an enchanting winter twilight) and the mystical ‘Northern Lights’,

Aurora Borealis. As special guest star, the tenor José Carreras, makes this concert an even more tremendous evening. The music is beautifully arranged by Kjetil Bjerkestrand. The musicians sharing the stage with Sissel are the Trondheim Soloists, Nidaros Cathedral Girls Choir and Sissel's own band.

This concert is also collaboration with the PBS and aired at different PBS stations throughout USA. She will tour the U.S. early 2008 with her Northern Lights Concert. "With my music, I hope to touch the hearts of the listener. I have to believe in it first to make you believe in it. This album and concert is me. I truly hope you will enjoy my music and my "Northern Light"!