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**LONE MADSEN: CLASSICAL MUSIC FOR THE MASSES**  
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# Classical music for the masses

Danish clarinettist Lone Widahl Madsen has collaborated with classical music superstars and performed at prestigious venues around the world, and now through her own arrangements and compositions, she is expressing “her own voice” on the album *White Sands*. Scan Magazine sat down with Madsen to discuss her ambition and dream to bring classical music and her beloved clarinet to the attention of wider audiences.

By Nia Kajastie | Cover photo: Derrick Santini

Warm, yearning and almost like an extension of your voice: Lone Madsen finds the beautiful tone of the clarinet an excellent, but thoroughly underused, medium for communicating emotions. With her album *White Sands*, which will be released at the end of May, Madsen hopes to bring the clarinet to the people.

“I basically wanted to create something of my own, something essential and beautiful around the clarinet, something that resonates with me. Obviously my roots are in classical music, so I’m very much a classical musician, but I wanted to bring that classical side up to date. I think classical music has, not a bad rep, but it has an association with being slightly stiff, and it’s not attracting young people. And I think it would be wonderful to win over that audience,” Madsen reflects.

Madsen admits that the recording process was hard work, and it took her five years to finish the album, including creating her own interpretations of music she loves and composing her own pieces. “It’s been a while coming, and I hope that I’ve communicated something a bit different,” she says.

The album name refers to the sand dune deserts up in the north of Denmark that Madsen finds breathtakingly incredible. She was inspired by the scenery and light; “It was like being in the Sahara.”

## Passion for music and drama

While Lone Madsen was born in Denmark, her family moved over to the UK when she was only four, so at a young age, her connection with her Danish roots was upheld through family, summer visits and the Saturday school at the Danish Church in London. Tall, blonde and with a relaxed air about her, Madsen is in many ways characteristically Danish; however, her education and career have taken her far “from home”.

Her passion for, not only classical, but all genres of music was ignited by her mother, whose side of the family was very musical. “I was always immersed in music and art,” says Madsen. “And when I picked up the clarinet for the first time, after receiving it as a present, I absolutely loved it, the sound, the tone. It was very much part of my childhood.”

In addition to music, Madsen was in love with a lot of things, including drama, dance and literature. Her choice to pursue her music career was cemented when she began her studies at the Juilliard School, a world-renowned American school that specialises in music, dance and drama, where she was taught by brilliant musicians, such as clarinettist Charles Neidich.

“There are stories about how competitive the school is, but my experience was that both the students and professors were fabulous. It was an amazing and inspiring time for me, and I was able to work with the other departments. We did multimedia shows, combining music, dance and acting. I was able to get people out of their boxes; it was a lot of fun.”

While she had her heart set on the clarinet, she was also interested in acting as a separate entity. “It was quite a dilemma for me for a while, and even though I decided to follow the musical path, it does not mean I’ve given up on acting completely, as you never know what’s going to come your way.”



Photo: Aurelia Marine

Lone Madsen finds the beautiful tone of the clarinet an excellent, but thoroughly underused, medium for communicating emotions.

Madsen has studied acting and even played the part of Miss Grey in Ang Lee's Oscar-winning adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility*. Even now, Lone has her mind set on a new acting project.

"In fact, we're developing a romantic comedy about a clarinetist right now, which is quite a lot of fun. You can imagine who is going to play the main part; I don't know anyone else who could do it apart from me," she laughs.

#### Collaboration and inspiration

After graduating from the Juilliard School, Madsen has gone on to play the clarinet and collaborate with some classical music luminaries, including Andrea Bocelli, Terry Barber, Thomas Ades, Milton Bab-

bit, Alfred Brendel, Michael Kamen and Nora Kroll Rosenbaum, as well as working with the English National Opera and *punchdrunk* theatre. In 2011, Madsen released a record with her classical group The Lumen Ensemble, and she has also composed music for use in film.

Madsen enjoys collaborative projects, and her vision is to mix classical music with different creative genres. She has recently worked together with a writer and director to create a show about Casanova that mixes together music, dance and theatre. "I think it's great to collaborate in this way, and it is again a way of introducing classical music to new audiences; this show has some great music in it. It is now finished, and while it was meant to be a

one night charity event at Kensington Palace, we are actually thinking of doing a run of the show."

Madsen's most current project is recording a repertoire with 18-time Grammy award-winning music producer Steve Epstein in Los Angeles and also going on a tour with it. And with the release of *White Sands* on iTunes and Amazon at the end of this month, more listeners will be introduced to her contemporary and elegant compositions, and the beautiful tone of the clarinet.

For more information, please visit:  
[www.lonemadsen.com](http://www.lonemadsen.com)