

**Dick Kattenburg Piano Works  
Piano Duo Friederike Haufe  
Volker Ahmels**

**d.k. stolen melodies**



## **Dick Kattenburg**

### **A Dutch composer 1919–1944**

Dick Kattenburg was born in Amsterdam on the 11th of November 1919. Both he and his siblings grew up in comfortable circumstances, as their greatgrandfather Levie, together with his ten sons, established a successful textile empire. Dick's father Louis worked in his cousin Jacques' Hollandia-Kattenburg factory and sat on the supervisory board of another family company. The family soon moved from Amsterdam to Naarden where Dick had a carefree youth. He attended grammar school in the neighbouring village of Bussum and had extraordinary artistic talents. He played the violin, composed music and was good at drawing. After finishing this secondary school it seems Dick attended the Collège Musical Belge, a private music academy in Antwerp. The seventeen year old left this college with the diploma "Théorie et violon".

On May 10th 1940 Nazi Germany invaded and occupied the Netherlands. On August 5th 1940 Dick's father died. In January 1941 all Jews were forced to register as such.

On the 7th of January 1941 his elder sister Daisy married Bernard van Hessen who joined her and the family in the Naarden home. In spite of the circumstances Dick managed to sit and pass the official State Exam for Music and Violin in The Hague, composer Willem Pijper being president of the examination board. This meant that from then on he was authorized to teach both disciplines. According to an advertisement dated September 7th 1941 in Het Joodsche Weekblad (The Jewish Weekly) he had established himself as a Violin and Theory teacher at the Naarden home he now shared with his mother, his sister, her husband and with his younger brother, as in the meantime "aryanization" had become paramount in the Dutch musical scene.

Due to the confrontation with his Jewish roots, Jewish culture occupied his mind more and more, and from 1942 he mainly dedicated himself to arranging hebrew melodies. Melodies he would alternately call Palestinian, Romanian or Mexican. The titles on these manuscripts were written in Hebrew lettering and for dating them he sometimes used the Jewish calendar. Even





Dick Kattenburg ca 1940, Photo Eduard Herman van Hessen



the Dal Segno symbol was sometimes replaced by a Star of David. Around this time Kattenburg started signing his compositions with pseudonyms like “CJ van Assendelft van Wijck” and “KvD” or “K. van Drunen” and “K. van Dunsen”.

Those manuscripts that have survived prove that during the summer of 1942 he acquainted himself better with the theory of instrumentation. To this effect he took private lessons with Leo Smit in Amsterdam. As it became more and more dangerous to meet in person, teacher and student continued their lessons by correspondence.

On Sunday morning June 20th 1943, in nearby Amsterdam and for all to see, there were large razzias (raids). Whole neighbourhoods were cordoned off and Jews were summoned to report to assembly points. Dick’s brother Tom and his mother Helena had by then managed to go into hiding in Deventer.

Dick Kattenburg moved to Utrecht where he was able to go into hiding at the home of his pianist friend Ytia Walburgh Schmidt. After this hideout was compromised, time and again he was forced to change his place

of abode. According to information from the Red Cross, his last known address was Uiterwaardenstraat 387 in Amsterdam.

In the end he was arrested, possibly during a raid in a cinema.

On May 8th 1944, whilst in Westerbork transit camp, he was allowed to send a letter to his uncle and aunt in Amsterdam, Herman and Cisca Kattenburg. The couple were still able to have an officially known address, Cisca not being Jewish. From Westerbork, on the 14th of May Dick Kattenburg was deported to Auschwitz, where he was murdered, probably between May 22 and September 30, 1944. The exact date of his death is not known.

## **Piano Duo Friederike Haufe**

### **Volker Ahmels**

Worldwide research and “discovery” of composers (and of their works) who were hindered by the Nazi-Regime in exercising their artistic profession, who were driven into exile or were deported and murdered in extermination camps, are some of the main topics in the lives of both these artists.

Their first meeting in 1998 in Israel, with pianist Edith Kraus gave rise to their intense preoccupation with “Ostracized Music”, until then a largely unknown theme.

Edith Kraus had been the youngest student in Artur Schnabel’s Berlin Masterclass, after which she began a promising career in Prague. In 1943 she was deported to Theresienstadt concentration camp, where she was one of the most prominent musicians.

Right up to Edith Kraus’ death in 2013, Friederike Haufe and Volker Ahmels stayed in regular touch with her.

Piano duo Friederike Haufe Volker Ahmels recorded their first CD for Medien Kontor Hamburg in 2006, with Franz Schubert’s

famous F minor Fantasy, Franz Liszt’s symphonic poem “Les Préludes” in the rarely played version by the composer himself, for four hands, as well as the piano waltzes for four hands “devised” by Wolfgang Rihm.

In 2012 a CD titled “Der Ochse auf dem Dach und andere Verbote” (The Ox on the Roof and further banned music) featuring works by Darius Milhaud, Hans Gál, Arnold Schönberg, Leo Smit, Erwin Schulhoff and Ernst Toch was published in Vienna by Gramola.

As from 2016 the piano duo began promoting the publication and the renewed performance of works by Hamburg born composer Ingolf Dahl, who had been forced to emigrate to Los Angeles because of his Jewish roots. They found Dahl’s piano manuscripts for four hands amongst his estate at the USC archives.

In 2017 Medien Kontor Hamburg in co-operation with the Centre for Ostracized Music at the Rostock Academy of Music and Theatre published these works as a scientific first edition of Dahl’s complete piano music for four hands. The première of Dahl’s “Four Intervals” can be heard



Piano Duo Friederike Haufe Volker Ahmels, Photo Oliver Borchert



played by Friederike Haufe and Volker Ahmels on the CD called “Ingolf Dahl Intervals” that was published by the same cooperation.

As early as 2014, the piano works for four hands by Dutch composer Dick Kattenburg have been forming part of their concert repertoire. They performed them several times in Hamburg and Amsterdam, but also in Los Angeles and Vienna. During the international Festival Verfemte Musik (Festival for Ostracized Music) in Schwerin, they played the world première of Dick Kattenburg’s 1938 Overture for two pianos op.3 No 1 that on this CD has been recorded for the first time. At the same time Donemus Amsterdam is publishing the reviewed edition of all scores for this combination, edited by Friederike Haufe and Volker Ahmels.

They met at a young age whilst studying the piano with Bernard Wambach. Internationally renowned for his interpretations of contemporary music, this later professor at the Folkwang Arts Academy in Essen, inspired a deep and lasting interest in 20th Century music in both young pianists.

In 1996 they joined forces to form a piano duo for their first international appearance in Israel and the autonomous Palestinian territories. In both parts of Jerusalem, in Tel Aviv and Haifa, as well as in Bethlehem and Ramallah they gave performances of piano works for four hands of the classic and romantic periods. Later they also included works for two pianos in their repertoire, such as Mozart’s complete opus for this combination and Bach’s piano concerto in C major BWV 1061, that they performed at the Schwerin Theatre with the Chamber Orchestra of the Mecklenburgische Staatskapelle.

They appeared at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, at the Musiksommer Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, at the International Piano Duo Festival Bad Herrenalb, several times at the Klavierfest Ammersee as well as the “Tons Voisins” Festival in Albi. Concert tours furthermore took them to France (Paris, Marseille), Austria (Vienna), Denmark (Odense), Spain (Tenerife), Poland (Pila), to the Czech Republic (Prague and Terezin), the Netherlands (Amsterdam) and on a regular basis to the USA (several times to

both Los Angeles and Philadelphia, but also to Cleveland, San Diego and Washington).

In 2018 Volker Ahmels was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit by Germany's President, for his contribution to the cause of ostracized music as Managing Director of the "Zentrum Verfemte Musik" at the Rostock Academy of Music and Theatre as well as Festival Director of the International Competition and Festival for Ostracized Music Schwerin.

## Tap-Dancer

Tonio Geugelin trained as a classical violinist. In 2012 he won second prize with his composition "Orient Express" at the Progressive Classical Music Award. As a German tap-dancing master, Tonio Geugelin has a great affinity with dance. He is in demand as a composer, producer, bandleader, arranger as well as live musician for dance and theatre projects, in both Germany and the Netherlands, where he

also studied jazz and popmusic. Furthermore he is multitalented as a singer, beatboxer, songwriter, loop station artist and in the field of music- and video-productions.

The interpretation heard on this CD is choreographed by Geugelin's teacher Uwe Meusel, one of Europe's leading tap-dance experts, who in his classes pays great attention to pure physical dance technique as well as to musical precision.

Film still from "Serenade trifft Blues", Photo Richard Haufe-Ahmels







Dick Kattenburg, Watercolour "Evening on the beach" (Knokke, Belgium), 1933.

## **Dick Kattenburg**

The Overture for two pianos and the piano compositions for four hands were all written within a 5 year period – between 1936 and 1941. During those years Dick Kattenburg was between 17 and 22 years old.

He had apparently already obtained degrees in composition and violin before he turned 17. Whether he himself was also an accomplished pianist, who played his own piano compositions alone or with a duo partner, remains unknown.

### **Overture for two pianos op.3 No 1 (1936) – Alla marcia, Allegro moderato**

The Overture is the only composition for two pianos with an opus number that has survived. And it is the only work by Dick Kattenburg written for two pianos. It was created during the same period as Tap Dance and that qualifies it as an early composition by a young man, just 17 years old. Matching the programmatic idea of an “opening march”, Kattenburg wrote this piece in C major and in the shape of a three-part song. The theme resembles a simple pen-

tatonic melody, but then develops into a tonal C major. Initially it appears unisono in the first register of the first piano, eventually becoming enriched with the fuller and deeper sounds of the second piano. This leads to the impression of enhancing the characteristic sound of piano with four hands playing. The slower seemingly impressionistic middle section starts in E minor. It fascinates with refined chromatic swirls, polytonality and harmonic jazzy movements. This means that it is not easy to determine a clear key signature. A virtuoso ending, thematically reminding us of the first movement, is the impressive conclusion of this promising early work.

### **Melodie (undated)**

Especially in “Melodie” Dick Kattenburg shows himself to be a master of melody. What is it that defines this mastery of melody-writing? His melodies, often very simple with an intrinsic logic between consecutive notes, seem to directly touch one’s heart. This short piece, preserved only as a pencil score, with some fragmentary added refrains, is laid out in two four bar phrases which



with the refined use of an echo could have been another “Lied ohne Worte”. We don’t know when this short work, in reality no more than a sketch, was written.

### **Deux Valses à quatre mains (1941/42)**

Only a few years after the death of Maurice Ravel, Dick Kattenburg composed two piano waltzes for four hands, both subtitled “à la Ravel” and to be played “attacca”, one after the other, without pause. Maurice Ravel, together with Claude Debussy was the foremost representative of musical impressionism. Even if Ravel did not write any piano waltzes for four hands, between 1906 and 1920 he did compose the orchestral work “La Valse” in which he expands the Viennese waltzes by means of impressionist harmonies and rhythms. In addition, in 1911 Ravel created a set of two waltzes for solo piano called “Valses nobles et sentimentales” which he orchestrated the following year. Ravel in turn referred to Franz Schubert’s “12 Valses nobles” (opus 77) and “34 Valses sentimentales” (opus 50) for solo piano. Dick Kattenburg also calls his first waltz “Valse noble” – in relation to

the faster Viennese waltz – and the second one “Valse sentimentale”. In both waltzes a refined irony is audible: The “Valse noble” sounds slightly unusual due to the melody’s chromatic development and the bitonality in its harmony. The melody begins in B major to be accompanied by a typical waltz bass in C major. And in its middle section “Valse sentimentale” becomes equally unusual because of a recurring rhythmical syncopated motif on the second beat, leading to the waltz rhythm being “off” by a crotchet. Just like Ravel, Dick Kattenburg wrote two versions of his piano waltzes: besides the version for four hands there is a further one for solo piano, dated 1941.

It is not known which of the two came into being first. The version for four hands is not dated and had to be completed.

### **Suite pour piano à quatre mains**

#### **I Flirtations II Blues III Lied ohne Worte**

The first movement of the Suite carries the name Flirtations. Flirt, in short, causing a certain erotic tension between two persons. Here we have a manuscript, dated 1938/39 proving that Dick Katttenburg

wrote the piece at the age of 19. The five part Rondo starts with an exuberant fanfare, that returns again and again, as is usual in the case of a Rondo. It is followed by a second movement, the melody of which could be described as coquettish and recitative-like. In the third movement the fanfare returns. In the fourth movement, a slower and at the same time more mischievous middle section can be heard, which with its direct juxtaposition of major and minor may even represent a programmatic reference to the title of the piece, before the movement ends, again with the fanfare. In 1940 Dick Kattenburg composed two Blues. The one for solo piano is named the “Tempo di Blues”, and this one, for four hands, was created as the second movement for the Suite. Blues are considered to be the foundation of popular North American music as Jazz, Rock, Rock’n Roll and Soul are all derived from the Blues. From the 1920s onwards, composers began to incorporate elements of Jazz into their classical compositions. In this movement, Dick Kattenburg uses the entire spectrum of pitches and dynamics of the pianoforte. Now and again

the melody of the Blues is placed in the deepest bass notes of the left hand in the second part, whilst the primary part stays ostinato. In the right hand the C minor triad always sounds in octaves, alternating crochet, dotted minim, while the left hand alternates, in the same rhythm, between the supertonic and tonic. This sigh-like motif however, is to be played in a minimalist and extremely sophisticated fashion, as a duplet, a triplet or as a punctuated line. The movement begins in triple pianissimo, reaches its dramatic climax in fortissimo before fading away, again in triple pianissimo. The genre “Lied ohne Worte” goes back to Felix Mendelssohn, who succeeded in creating short, romantic character pieces for the piano, conveying the impression that there was no need for a singing voice or text, for the listener to have the same emotional experience. Dick Kattenburg succeeds in doing the same. His “Lied ohne Worte” (Song without Words) is in F sharp major and is written as a three-part song. The middle section, labeled “poco Adagio” and “con dolore” is kept in simple polyphony and is in D sharp minor. In 1844, Hector



Berlioz developed a key table in which he tried to assign an individual sound character to each separate key. He found that F sharp major stands for a brilliant sound whereas D sharp minor stands for a dull sound. We do not know whether Dick Kattenburg knew this table. What we do know is that on May 15, 1940, the Dutch armed forces surrendered, five days after the invasion of the Netherlands by Nazi Germany. On May 29, 1940 the Austrian Arthur Seyss Inquart was appointed “Reich Commissioner for the Netherlands”. He was politically responsible for the introduction of racial laws and thus also for the persecution, deportation and murder of around 100.000 Dutch Jews. It is under these circumstances that Dick Kattenburg dedicated his “Lied ohne Worte”, the third movement of the Suite dated June 19, 1940, to his mother Helena for her 50th birthday on June 28, 1940. His niece Joyce Bergman-van Hessen assumes that this serenade was, most likely, performed on Helena’s birthday, as at the time the family was still living in their Naarden home.

### **Tap Dance (1936) – Allegro vivo**

This very convincing jazzy piano piece was written when Dick Kattenburg was 17 years old. It has an added, quite demanding, rhythmical part for either tap-dancer or percussionist. A stand-alone voice in triplets, in juxtaposition to the piano score, leaves the audience in uncertainty as to who is accompanying whom. Tap-dancing was extremely popular between 1900 and 1955. It played an important part in Broadway Shows and in American Variety Theater in general. Tap-dancers were often engaged by Big Bands as well. Jazz being the music the tap-dance was set to, they were regarded as practically identical. The tap-dancer would then fulfill the role of percussionist. Dick Kattenburg’s Tap Dance is even more proof of his affinity with Jazz.

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- [1 ] 3:30 Ouverture for two pianos op.3 No1 (1936), first recording.  
Alla marcia, Allegro moderato,
- [2] 0:47 Melodie (undatiert) first recording.  
Deux Valses á quatre mains (1941/42)
- [3] 1:10 Valse I – vive (Valse noble à la Ravel)
- [4] 2:06 Valse II – poco lento (Valse sentimentale à la Ravel)  
Suite pour piano à quatre mains (1938), first recording.
- [5] 4:25 I Flirtations – Allegro vivace assai
- [6] 3:00 II Blues
- [7] 3:11 III Lied ohne Worte – Andante cantabile
- [8] 1:56 Tap Dance (1936) – Allegro vivo

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Cover picture: Dick Kattenburg by Theo Kroeze, Dutch painter (1916–1988).

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