



SONO
LUMINUS

NORTHSCAPES

Ieva Jokubaviciute

NORTHSCAPES

Invocation of Pristine Light, Op. 52, No. 1 (2014) 7:55

Lasse Thoresen

Scape (2011) 7:42

Anna Thorvaldsdottir

from 12 Nocturnes (2000-2014)

Bent Sorensen

I: *Mignon - Und die Sonne geht Unter* 4:08

III: *Nachtlicher Fluss* 1:16

VII: *Mitternacht mit Mignon* 2:46

Prelude (2007) 6:58

Kaija Saariaho

Fantasia (1997) 10:18

Raminta Šerkšnytė

Music for a Summer Evening (2009) 5:57

Pēteris Vasks

Invocation of Rising Air, Op. 52, No. 2 (2014) 7:44

Lasse Thoresen

Total Time: 54:50



Ieva Jokubaviciute, piano



Lithuanian pianist Ieva Jokubaviciute's powerfully and intricately crafted performances have earned her critical acclaim throughout the United State, Europe, Asia, and South America. Her ability to communicate the essential substance of a work has led critics to describe her as possessing "razor-sharp intelligence and wit" (*The Washington Post*) and as "an artist of commanding technique, refined temperament and persuasive insight" (*The New York Times*). In 2006, she was honored as a recipient of a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship.

Jokubaviciute's Alban Berg Tribute CD was released to critical acclaim in 2010. The New York Times described her as "an authoritative and compelling guide throughout this fascinating disc." Her 2014 album *Returning Paths: Solo Piano Works by Janacek and Suk* resulted in solo recitals in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington DC.

She made her orchestral debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Ravinia Festival and has since performed concerti with orchestras in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Montevideo, Uruguay; Washington, DC; and North Dakota. A much sought-after chamber musician and collaborator, notably with violinist Midori, Jokubaviciute's chamber music endeavors have brought her to major stages and festivals around the world. Her piano trio, Trio Cavatina, won the 2009 Naumburg International Chamber Music Competition and toured extensively throughout the US.

Earning degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and from Mannes College of Music in New York City, her principal teachers have been Seymour Lipkin and Richard Goode. After having served on the faculty at Shenandoah Conservatory, Ieva is currently Associate Professor of Piano at Duke University. She has joined the faculty at the Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival in Maine and has established herself as a mentoring artist at the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont.

<https://www.ievajokubaviciute.com>



LANDSCAPE

SOUNDSCAPE

MINDSCAPE

The recording project *Northscapes* weaves works—from the first decades of the twenty-first century by composers from the Nordic and Baltic countries of Europe—into a tapestry of soundscapes, vibrating between landscape and the imagination, between the external and internal, between nature and psyche. What these works for piano solo share is a particular attunement to nature, reverberating out of the ever-present reservoir of pagan myths, legends, and folk music of the region. Their sensitivity to the sonic environment allows these composers to explore the liminal space dividing yet connecting landscape, soundscape, and mindscape.

More than mere musical “representations” of the striking natural landscapes of the North, each work, in its own way, attempts to transform the natural world into imaginary geographies. More than simply pastoral nostalgia, these sonic meditations on nature reach beyond the physical to the spiritual. Whether it is vast cosmic space or the intimate, interiority of the expressive voice, these works harness the power of music to probe the emotional contours of the tension between world and mind. Haunted by landscapes colored by memory, fantasy, dreams, decay and infused with emotion, this music shifts consciousness through a transformation of landscape to soundscape to mindscape.

LIGHT, AIR, PURE CONSCIOUSNESS, SPIRIT

The four pieces collected under Norwegian composer Lasse Thoresen's (b. 1949) *Four Invocations*, Op. 52 are incantations summoning the four elements: light, air, water, and earth. At the same time, they also refer to the four parallel dimensions of human reality: pure consciousness, spirit, soul, and body. Thoresen explains that, "the elements that are named in the titles are not primarily material: it is the symbolic reality of the natural elements that is being invoked." These works represent the movement from the natural world to the inner world of subjectivity: from landscape to mindscape, from sound to thought. It is not the material nature of these elements that this music is meant to render sonically; rather, Thoresen's music is a process of transformation made possible by the interaction of the performer, instrument, and score and, in turn, the further interaction between the performer's interpretation and our experience as listeners.

To open the possibility of such a transformation, which infuses his music with a "living presence", Thoresen's scores for the first two invocations of the set "Pristine Light" and "Rising Air" (2014), which open and close this recording program, give the interpreter much more latitude and freedom than the fixed "set of instructions" of the traditional score. In both of these ethereal works, it is up to the performer to decide how to combine the sections into different successions. Each performance is radically different, and yet Thoresen's concern with sound, timbre, and color remain ever-present and continually suggests the unseen forces behind and beyond nature.

SOUND ECOSYSTEMS

Anna Thorvaldsdottir (b. 1977) has emerged as one of the most creative and performed composers today, certainly of her generation. Absorbing the stark, other-worldly landscapes of her native Iceland, her music explores the world of sound through organically emerging ecosystems of nuance, texture, and harmonic and lyrical material. These sonic ecosystems, in a continual state of becoming, simultaneously evoke the natural environment and invoke imaginary landscapes of the mind.

Case in point: her *Scape* from 2011 calls for the piano to be prepared with screws placed between certain strings, for the use of a thimble, and for the application of an e-bow. Already, we have here the composer asking the performer to coax a host of sounds and gestures from inside the piano beyond hammers striking strings. The preparation of the piano and use of extended techniques unleash sounds inherent to the instrument yet repressed by the mechanisms of the tradition. This is to say that Thorvaldsdottir's *Scape* re-frames or re-configures precisely that which is hidden on the surface, making audible what remained silent. Preserving a sense of mystery, *Scape*'s non-visual sonic abstractions mirror the workings of the mind and suggest the nebulous world, outside of space and time, bubbling underneath consciousness: the lava surging underneath the earth's crust.

MEMORY OF MUSIC NEVER HEARD

2018 Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition recipient, Bent Sørensen (b. 1958) has proven himself to be the leading Danish composer of his generation. Sørensen's music probes the ambiguous and almost paradoxical nature of the fragility of sound, always on the verge of dissolving. Fleeting memories and dream-worlds haunt Sørensen's work as his music attempts to navigate the decay of an imagined past.

Composed from 2000 to 2014, Sørensen's *12 Nocturnes* offered a contemplative, intimate respite from work on his larger scale, more public compositions. Sørensen, with the *Nocturnes*, enters the shadowy web of night-music and its spectral fantasies. The three nocturnes presented here take up the character Mignon from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, thus joining an exalted list of composers fascinated by the 13-year old androgynous girl's mysterious persona which anticipates many of Freud's insights. In "Mignon and the Sun Goes Down", "Night River", and "Midnight with Mignon", Sørensen's uncanny sonorities and melodies absorbed by the obscurity of night recall a past that never quite was: an Oedipal fantasy, a sequel to a lost original.

A close-up photograph of the interior of a piano, showing the strings, hammers, and dampers. Red ribbons are tied around the strings, creating a rhythmic pattern. The lighting is warm and focused on the central part of the instrument.

SYNAESTHETIC CARTOGRAPHY

Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho (b. 1952) continues to be a creative force on the international music scene, with commissions and awards from major institutions and ensembles from all over the world. Her association with Paris's IRCAM allowed Saariaho to move away from strict serialism towards spectralism and the development of her synaesthetic approach to sound, timbre, color, polyphony, and transformation.

Saariaho's *Prelude* explores the pianistic challenges of physical boundaries in relation to the instrument. She approaches the instrument from the extreme ends of the keyboard and patiently explores layers of sounds and movement. The motion of the work unfolds through the layering of repeated, haunted ostinato figures, transparent glissandos, and broad horizontal gestures across the entire keyboard, thus creating a vast and beautiful sound map of an unknown territory.

NOCTURNAL SOUND PAINTING

With Lithuanian composer Raminta Šerkšnytė's (b. 1975) *Fantasia* (1997), we enter the world of dreams. She writes that the, "*Fantasia* for piano is made up of two constantly changing themes... The first theme has a melancholy, wistful character, one of 'inaccessible distances'... The fast and restless character of the second theme is like a surge out of a melancholy torpor, expressed in a virtuosic pointillist texture."

Within a post-romantic musical language, Šerkšnytė's works balance the intensity of emotional expression with formal structures resulting in intricate tapestries that map the mind. A range of psychological states and archetypes, not to mention a deep rootedness in nature, serve as sources of inspiration.

The two constantly changing themes of her *Fantasia* can be seen as re-animations of Schumann's opposing alter egos Florestan and Eusebius, who symbolize the tension of contradictory opposites within the Romantic imagination. Further still, the entanglement of these two thematic forces mirrors the dialectical relation of ego and unconscious, of the manifest and latent content of the dream-work. After these two themes intertwine in the finale, Šerkšnytė explains that, "in the coda, there is a return to the original state of bright longing as if returning 'back into a dream'." The retroactive dream of the dream, a return...

NATURE TRANSUBSTANTIATED

The conviction and intensity of Pēteris Vasks's (b. 1946) music have carved out a position for the Latvian as one of the most important living Baltic composers. Vasks's music is, at once, associated with his country's struggle for independence and reflects the dramatic landscape of his home. He explains that, "I am deeply rooted in nature, in the nature of the North. It influences all of my music."

Vasks's *Music for a Summer Evening* is a prime example of his ability to transpose the "nature of the North" into the spiritual realm. About this work from 2009, Vasks writes:

It describes the quiet end of a summer day. The sun sets. Slowness. Memories of previous experiences rise. With the memories' appearance comes an increase in intensity. Towards the end, a kind of folksong is heard: "We have survived the time of tyranny and have kept our identity." The ending is quiet, everything is asleep.

This is music rooted in the earth and infused with memory, nostalgia of and for the folksong, with the subjective contours of the mind pointing to a transcendence beyond the self. Vasks's music unearths the trauma hidden within the natural landscape and, in turn, "transubstantiates" it into "divine nature".

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<http://et.pfi.lt/arune/index.html>

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