



NORDIC AFFECT
H e (a) r

The only way to find a larger vision is to be somewhere in particular
Donna Haraway

H e (a) r is an ode to hear, here, hér* and her. It springs from treasured collaborations that allowed us to 'send sound and receive sound' (Pauline Oliveros). We now extend it to you, this meditation on embodiment, acoustics and ecology. An album which rides on the wave of questions that rise and rise

Whose sounds?

Whose bodies?

Whose voices?

Hjartans þakkir / Thank you for joining us
Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir
Artistic director of Nordic Affect

*hér is the Icelandic word for here



SPIRALS

In mathematics, a spiral is a curve which emanates from a point, moving farther away as it revolves around the point. In 'Spirals', dense chords, a lost cadence, sounding through an old piano and fragmented sounds from old music boxes is the original departure point that the piece revolves around. These spirals are not precise or mathematical, they refer to time and musical motion. The work is the third in a trilogy of compositions created for Nordic Affect, evolving around the concept of time, the other being 'Sleeping Pendulum' and 'Clockworking'.

LOOM

A loom is a device used to weave cloth and tapestry. The basic purpose of any loom is to hold the warp threads under tension to facilitate the interweaving of the weft threads. The precise shape of the loom and its mechanics may vary, but the basic function is the same. 'Loom' was originally created as an audio and video composition for Nordic Affect, the video component authored by visual artist Dodda Maggý. The collaboration drew on structural qualities found in both musical and visual composition, in an attempt to find a balance and a dialog between the aural and the visual. In accordance with the hybrid practices of 21st century the audio and video of Loom can be performed jointly or shared as independent works.

—María Huld Markan Sigfúsdóttir maria.sigfusdottir.com

REFLECTIONS

For Nordic Affect in 2016.

IMPRESSIONS

For Guðrún Óskarsdóttir in 2015.

—Anna Thorvaldsdóttir

annathorvalds.com

WARM LIFE AT THE FOOT OF THE ICEBERG

The title 'Warm life at the foot of the iceberg' is from Estonian poet, Kristiina Ehin, whose poetry has inspired me several times before. I think this title describes well the character and technique of this work: contrasts between 'cold' airy colors in high register plus rustle, and rhythmic 'rocky' sections, sometimes performed with extra pressure; and gliding between these two contrasting worlds. Like a melting iceberg, unstable on the ground, rapidly vanishing.

—Mirjam Tally

mirjamtally.com

POINT OF DEPARTURE

I wrote a solo violin piece for Halla Steinunn of Nordic Affect in 2014. At the premiere the other members of the group excitedly asked me when they would get to play a piece like this. So it has been on the drawing table for a while to write a piece like 'that' for the whole group. In the violin piece '2 Circles' I was looking at the relationship between a musician with his instrument, and the violinist had to tune her voice with the instrument. The piece sounds rather simple, but great concentration is required from the hand and voice of the musician.

In the piece 'Point of Departure' I continue to explore this delicate relationship between a person and her instrument, with the addition of the tuning together with other musicians and their voices. The musicians need to play as one instrument. One voice.

—Hildur Guðnadóttir

hildurness.com

H E (A) R

Soundscape connected to ecology, acoustics and embodiment; drawing on encounters and what happens in the connection. A fluctuation between hear-here-hér*-her. Performers are Carina Ehrenholm (SE), Angela Rawlings (IS/CA), Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir (IS) and Liv Kaastrup Vesterskov (DK). Text score extracted from writings and digital works by Angela Rawlings (In Memory: Jökull**, Jöklar) as well as by Roni Horn, Pauline Oliveros, R. Murray Schafer, David Suzuki, Bruce Chatwin, Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir, Bernhard Leitner, Heidi Fast, Robert Macfarlane and Salomé Voegelin. 'H e (a) r' was directed and composed by Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir at Inter Arts Center in Malmö, Sweden.

—Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir

hallasteinunn.com

*HÉR IS THE ICELANDIC WORD FOR *HERE*.

**JÖKULL IS THE ICELANDIC WORD FOR *GLACIER*.

TEXT FOR H E (A) R

'Þrándarjökull becomes Granda Jökli (to destroy glacier)
Þórisjökull becomes Óróajökull (turmoil glacier)
Eiríksjökull becomes Eigi Jökull (no glacier)
Hofsjökull becomes Hálfjökull (half glacier)
Snæfellsjökull becomes Smækka Jökull (to shrink glacier)
Tungnafellsjökull becomes Áfallsjökull (trauma glacier)
Tindfjallajökull becomes Týnafjallajökli (to lose mountain glacier)
Mýrdalsjökull becomes Myrða Jökul (to murder glacier)
Sólheimajökull becomes Sálugi Jökull (decreased glacier)
Heinabergsjökull becomes Harmabergsjökul (to lament glacier)
Eyjafjallajökull becomes Eyðafjallajökli (to destroy mountain glacier)'

ANGELA RAWLINGS. *JÖKLAR*. COLDFRONT MAGAZINE, 2014

From *Long Title*:

'If on a Winter's Night—Some women—shadows, ghosts, and girls'

'A girl—almost YOU, almost ME

—are brought together'

From *Making Being Here Enough*:

'I want to make being here enough. Maybe it's already enough. I won't have to invent enough. I'll be here and I won't do anything and this place will be here, but I won't do anything to it. I'll just let it be here....I need to experience the difference between being here and not changing here, and being here and changing here.'

From *I Can't See the Arctic Circle from Here*:

'A diffuse whiteness lifts off the surface, making it less a thing and more a part of other things: a part of the ocean and a part of the sky and even a part of the weather. Unaffected by the growing lateness of the day the sun remains high. Slowly a surround of distant specks, various other celestial bodies, become visible. The emerging multitude reveals their light without shedding it. But I continue staring out—believing it's only a matter of time before the subtleties of the view reveal themselves and the Circle becomes the discrete, perceptible thing that it is.'

RONI HORN. *RONI HORN*. HATJE CANTZ, 2012

'A circle formation is preferred as it is an equalizing symbol and may strengthen the understanding...'

'Listening also may have a kind of secrecy about it. One can listen to others without their knowing it.'

'With each breath I send sound and receive sound.'

'The ear is a faithful collector of all sounds that can be gathered within its limits of frequency and amplitude. Sounds beyond the limits of the ear may be gathered by other sensory systems of the body.'

'How can you not listen if your ears never close?'

PAULINE OLIVEROS, FOUNDER OF DEEP LISTENING® IN *DEEP LISTENING: A COMPOSER'S SOUND PRACTICE* © 2005 BY DEEP LISTENING PUBLICATIONS. I UNIVERSE

'to leave the trace of an inhabited possibility'

SALOMÉ VOEGELIN. *COLLATERAL DAMAGE*. THE WIRE, MAY 2014

'Answer me with your own voice, from your window or balcony (or your neighbour's) when you hear my voice, or come down to the street and sing with me!'

'The voice—or sound in general—is not divisible into parts that can be controlled or quantified. Sound is not easily delimited. This is political, even though it may not be visible. My essential goal is to establish small islets that deal with multiplying the power in us, or in a nonhuman world.'

'to ruffle and round the edges between interior and exterior, to open up the in-between.'

HEIDI FAST IN GEORGINA BORN (ED.). *MUSIC, SOUND AND SPACE: TRANSFORMATIONS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EXPERIENCE*. CAMBRIDGE: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2013

'The subject we are concerned with is sound...'

R. MURRAY SCHAFER IN *A SOUND EDUCATION*. ARCANA EDITIONS, 1992

'boundaries of sound spaces can go through the body'

'space can extend into the body'

BERNHARD LEITNER IN GEORGINA BORN (ED.). *MUSIC, SOUND AND SPACE: TRANSFORMATIONS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EXPERIENCE*. CAMBRIDGE: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2013

'each totemic ancestor, while travelling through the country, was thought to have scattered a trail of words and musical notes along the line of his footprints'

BRUCE CHATWIN. *THE SONGLINES*. VINTAGE, 1987. © BRUCE CHATWIN. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE ESTATE OF THE AUTHOR C/O ROGERS, COLERIDGE & WHITE LTD., 20 POWIS MEWS, LONDON W11 1JN

'what do I know when I am in this place that I can know nowhere else?'

'what does this place know of me that I cannot know of myself?'

ROBERT MACFARLANE. *THE OLD WAYS: A JOURNEY ON FOOT*. HAMISH HAMILTON, PENGUIN, 2012

'Learning to converse well with the world can begin by listening carefully to the messages sent ceaselessly by our bodies and by the other forms of life that share this planet.'

'The best conversations are still those that play on the variations on that great and ancient theme, "I'm here; Where are you?"'

'Today we can see the beginnings of a new way of thinking about the world-as sets of relationships rather than separated objects.'

DAVID SUZUKI WITH AMANDA MCCONNELL & ADRIENNE MASON (2007). *THE SACRED BALANCE*. GREYSTONE BOOKS, 2007

ALL OTHER TEXT BY HALLA STEINUNN STEFÁNSDÓTTIR, CREATED FOR H E (A) R, 2017

NORDIC AFFECT

Decades ago the Sugarcubes proved to the rest of the world that Icelandic rock was its own original creation - now Nordic Affect promises to do the same for the country's new-music community.

—The Chicago Reader

Icelandic ensemble Nordic Affect has been hailed as 'multi-disciplinary force of nature' (*A Closer Listen*), as gem in Iceland's music life (*Fréttablaðið*) and for 'ineffable synergy between the performers' (*San Francisco Classical Voice*). Founded in 2005, Nordic Affect was formed by a

group of period instrument musicians who were united in their passion for viewing familiar musical forms from a different perspective and for daring to venture into new musical terrain. In 2013 the ensemble was nominated for the Nordic Council Music Prize and was named Performer of the Year at the Iceland Music Awards in 2014.

Believing that music knows no boundaries, Nordic Affect has brought its music-making to contemporary and rock audiences alike and performed to critical acclaim

at festivals such as TRANSIT Festival (BE), Dark Music Days (IS), November Music (NL), Skaņu Mežs (LV), Ensembles Festival (SP), North Atlantic Flux (UK) and Estonian Music Days (EE). Its members have individually performed with artists and groups such as Concerto Copenhagen, Anima Eterna Brugge, The Six Tones and Björk. The commissioning and performance of new works is integral to Nordic Affect's mission as it has, from the group's inception, combined new compositions with the music of the 17th and 18th centuries. In addition,

the group emphasizes educational programming and highlights women's role in music history. Since their debut album in 2007, Nordic Affect's performances can be found on the Deutsche Grammophon, Bad Taste Records, Musmap, Brilliant Classics and Sono Luminus labels.

The artistic director of Nordic Affect since its founding has been Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir.

For more information visit nordicaffect.com.

SPECIAL THANKS

Árný Inga Pálsdóttir, Ingólfur Björn Sigurðsson, Guðlaug Friðgeirsdóttir, Robert Svensson, Stefan Östersjö, Kent Olofsson, Sólveig Ýr Sigurgeirsdóttir and Angela Rawlings.

Iceland's Ministry of Education and Culture and The Culture Fund of Reykjavík City.



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CREDITS for all works except H e (a) r:

PRODUCER Dan Merceruio

RECORDING, MIXING & MASTERING ENGINEER Daniel Shores

RECORDING TECHNICIAN Allison Noah

EDITING ENGINEERS Dan Merceruio, Daniel Shores

HARPSICHORD French harpsichord by Thomas and Barbara Wolf, 1991, The Plains, Virginia, after Pascal Taskin, 1770

RECORDED AT Sono Luminus Studios, Boyce, Virginia on September 11-15, 2017. Info at sonoluminus.com.

CREDITS for H e (a) r:

PERFORMERS Carina Ehrenholm, Angela Rawlings, Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir and Liv Kaastrup Vesterskov

PRODUCER Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir

RECORDING ENGINEERS Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir & Kent Olofsson

MIXING & MASTERING ENGINEER Daniel Shores

RECORDED AT Inter Arts Center's studios, Malmö, Sweden on December 14-15, 2017.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Minna Kurjenluoma (cover), David Oldfield (p. 5)

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Caleb Nei

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Collin J. Rae

BLU-RAY AUTHORING: Stefan Bock, MSM-Studios

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