

SONO  
LUMINUS  
SL|Editions



NORDIC AFFECT  
RAINDAMAGE



1 **RAINDAMAGE** 4' 44  
Valgeir Sigurðsson | violin, viola, cello, electronics

2 **ÞÝÐ** 9' 20  
Úlfur Hansson | violin, viola, cello, voices

3 **NOA::EMS** 5' 36  
Hlynur Aðils Vilmarsson | electronics

4 **ANTIGRAVITY** 4' 40  
Valgeir Sigurðsson | electronics

5 **[:n:]** 9' 48  
Hlynur Aðils Vilmarsson | violin, viola, cello, harpsichord

6 **SKIN CONTINUUM** 4' 58  
Úlfur Hansson | electronics

## **RAINDAMAGE NORDIC AFFECT**

Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir, violin  
Guðrún Hrund Harðardóttir, viola  
Hanna Loftsdóttir, cello  
Guðrún Óskarsdóttir, harpsichord



## Entering the cracks of Raindamage

by Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir

*...taking risks, buoyed by collaborative support, contributes to a developing, changing self. Through collaboration we can transcend the constraints of biology, of time, of habit, and achieve a fuller self, beyond the limitations and the talents of the isolated individual. (John-Steiner, 2000)*

*Raindamage* is the fruit of artistic collaboration, a kind of a micro lab exploring the creative possibilities and processes involved in the making of an album. It is an attempt to unpack the 'tacit processes of musical collaboration' and immediately raises the question: how do you crack them open in order to gain a further insight, which in return can lead to new ways of doing?

The origins of the *Raindamage* project can be traced back to a concert titled *Flow*, which featured the ensemble Nordic Affect's premiere of works by Úlfur Hansson, Valgeir Sigurðsson and Hlynur A. Vilmarsson. The event, curated by myself and co-produced by Artangel (UK), took place at Roni Horn's Library of Water in Iceland as a part of Reykjavík Arts Festival in 2014. I had followed the work of composer/producer Valgeir Sigurðsson

through the years and wanted to collaborate with him on an even more integrated level than on Nordic Affect's album *Clockworking* on which he did the final mixing and mastering. I therefore pitched the idea to the ensemble and the composers to create an album which features the three works premiered at the Library of Water as well as three electronic works by the same composers. Their music reflects strong influences from popular, noise and electronic music, thus echoing John Cage's words towards the end of his life when he said, 'We live in a time I think, not of mainstream, but of many streams' (Cage, 1992). As luck would have it, everyone was on board and thanks to generous crowdfunding support, we recorded the album at Greenhouse Studios, the creative hub of Valgeir Sigurðsson in Reykjavík.

Roni Horn's sentiments on how weather can invite conversation, which in turn can reveal the individual and the social, are echoed in the *Raindamage* project. One could in fact argue that the Library of Water, a space that wishes to engage the spectator in a heightened sense of the environment, was transferred into a tool to create a similar engagement with the ecology of a music studio environment. So just as you shape and are shaped by the earth, we in the *Raindamage* project tapped into these action-perception loops, be it through a musician's interaction with his instrument,



a composer's concrete electronic listening, the recording of parts where sound overrides the score, or the listening and interaction required in the construction process of editing and mixing. During the recording process we also formulated a couple of strategies, which perhaps could be likened to Brian Eno and Peter Schmidt's *Oblique Strategies* and it was only at the end that we could fully experience their impact on the *Raindamage* constellation.

At the heart of *Raindamage* are therefore the most valuable systems of all: the collective and the collaborative. The *Raindamage* narratives are of course as many as the participants. In my instance, the continual tossing of the creative ball between my generous friend and colleague Valgeir Sigurðsson and myself, led to the creation of *V A R P*, an installation room which invites you into the nesting site of *Raindamage*: a space for ecological navigation. *V A R P* had its premiere already in November 2016 in Sweden, before the album release. This only goes to show the fast changing work paradigm here at the cusp of the 21st century. An unreleased album had already become a new work.

We now extend the 'connect' to you. We hope you will enjoy *Raindamage*.

*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 for its 'affectionate explorations' (*BBC Music Magazine*) and 'commitment to their repertoire' (*Classical Music*). 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), BRQ Vantaa Festival (FI), Estonian Music Days (EE) and Iceland Airwaves (IS). Its members have individually performed and recorded with artists and groups such as The English Concert, Concerto Copenhagen, Anima Eterna Brugge 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

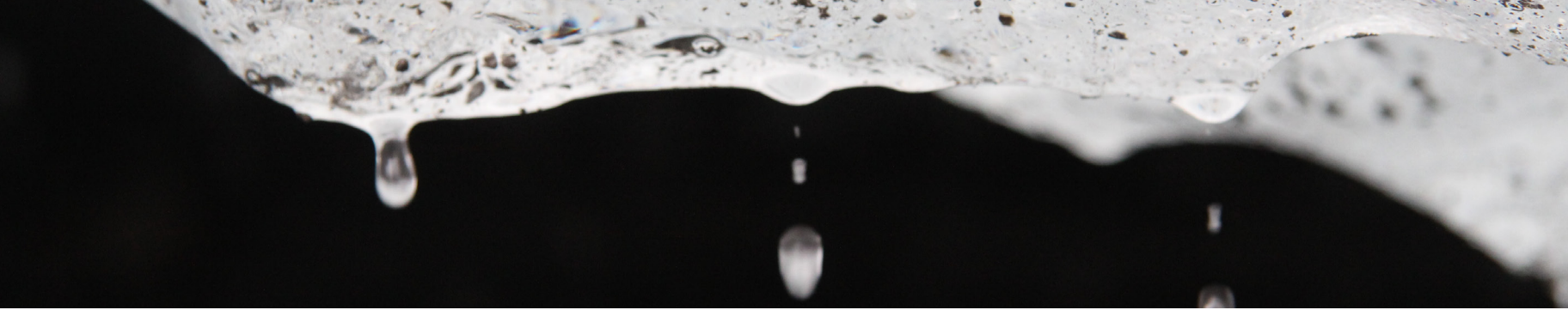
new compositions with the music of the 17th and 18th centuries. In addition, the group emphasizes educational programming and highlights women's role in music history. Since their debut album in 2007, Nordic Affect's performances can be found on the Deutsche Grammophon, Bad Taste Records, Musmap, Brilliant Classics and Sono Luminus labels.

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

For more information visit [www.nordicaffect.com](http://www.nordicaffect.com).







**Valgeir Sigurðsson** is an Icelandic composer and producer. As the editor and curator of the Bedroom Community label he founded in 2006, his work with the likes of Nico Muhly, Ben Frost, Paul Corley, Sam Amidon and Daníel Bjarnason features a constantly evolving appreciation of the diversity of music in the world. Three solo works, *Ekvilibríum* (2007), *Draumalandið* (2010) and *Architecture of Loss* (2013) will be followed in 2017 by the intensely reflective *Dissonance*.

Elsewhere, with an enterprising understanding of where forward looking, genre liquefying modern music is moving, his collaborators have included Björk, Bonnie 'Prince' Billy, Feist, Damon Albarn, CocoRosie, Sigur Rós, Jóhann Jóhannsson, Brian Eno, Tim

Hecker, Anohni, Oneohtrix Point Never and Alarm Will Sound.

As adept at working in electronic and studio settings, and generating evocative soundtracks for film or composing orchestral and chamber pieces, his work for theatre, dance and installations demonstrates how Sigurðsson thinks like a painter and sculptor as much as sound artist and musician.

**Hlynur Aðils Vilmarsson** has enjoyed a diverse career in music, be it as a member of Icelandic rock bands or the composers' collective s.l.á.t.u.r. Infused with a passion for experimentation, his work has also extended to the realm of technology within the platform of LornaLab (Reykjavík Media Lab). Vilmarsson's work has

earned him commissions from various groups and been performed at festivals such as the Tectonics festival curated by conductor Ilan Volkov. In recent years his music has been played in Europe, USA and Asia, by groups like Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Brodsky String Quartet, Uusinta Chamber Ensemble and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.

Having worked with some of the most prominent Icelandic musicians (Jónsi of Sigur Rós, Ólöf Arnalds, Jófríður of Samaris, Skúli Sverrisson of Blonde Redhead) **Úlfur Hansson** made his mark on the music scene as an electronic music producer, live-improviser, orchestral composer and sound artist. Hansson graduated in composition from Mills College (CA), and his work earned him a win as young composer at the 2013 International Rostrum of Composers. Commissions have included works for the Tectonics festival curated by Ilan Volkov and the Kronos Quartet's project Fifty for the Future.

*White Mountain*, Úlfur Hansson's 2013 debut release on Western Vinyl (Dirty Projectors, Here We Go Magic) featured orchestrations of strings and woodwinds interwoven with concrete sounds and synthesis - his upcoming album *Arborescence* further explores acoustical composition interwoven with electronic movement, rhythm and pulse.



## Nordic Affect

Raindamage

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The title *Raindamage* is derived from *Wide slumber for lepidopterists* by a rawlings.

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a rawlings, Hrafn Stefánsson, Guðlaug Friðgeirsdóttir, Valgarður Gíslason, Borgar Magnason, Vera Júlíusdóttir, Kolbeinn Bjarnason, Elísabet Indra Ragnarsdóttir and Stefan Östersjö.

**Cover and Inlay Photos** taken at Sólheimajökull glacier, Iceland by a rawlings ©2014

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Valgeir Sigurðsson – Raindamage (2014) for violin, viola, cello & electronics. Editing Valgeir Sigurðsson. Published by Faber Music Ltd.

Úlfur Hansson – Þýð (2014) for violin, viola, cello & voices. Editing Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir, Úlfur Hansson & Valgeir Sigurðsson.

Hlynur Aðils Vilmarsson – noa::ems (2016) for electronics.\*

Valgeir Sigurðsson – Antigravity (2016) for electronics. Published by Faber Music Ltd.

Hlynur Aðils Vilmarsson – [:n:] (2014) for violin, viola, cello & harpsichord. Editing Halla Steinunn Stefánsdóttir, Hlynur Aðils Vilmarsson & Valgeir Sigurðsson.

Úlfur Hansson – Skin continuum (2016) for electronics.

Recorded at Greenhouse Studios by Paul Evans and Valgeir Sigurðsson. Mix and mastering Valgeir Sigurðsson.

\*Recorded at EMS (Stockholm).

Performer in 'Skin continuum' Nava Dunkelmann, Uchiwa Daiko drum.

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