

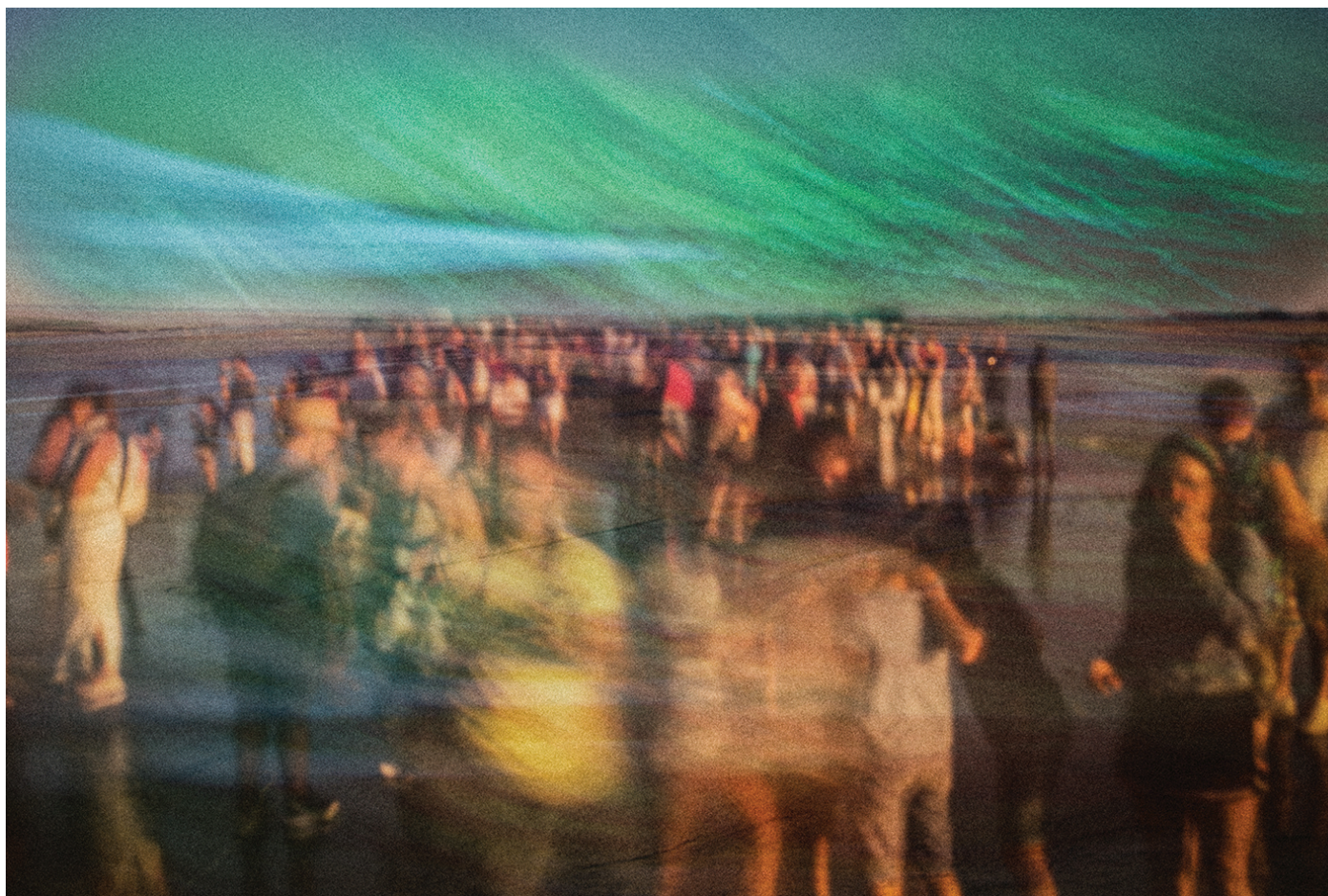


JOURNEYS

Orchestral Music from Five Continents

Audun André Sandvik, Cello

Norwegian Radio Orchestra • Miguel Harth-Bedoya



Journeys

As a Peruvian-born, American-trained conductor of a Norwegian orchestra, I am often inspired by the way that music unites us. Here in Oslo, the city where the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded, we wanted to look at how music, like the poetic concept of peace, can unite the world. The idea behind the *Journeys* album is to create, in a tangible form, an example of that unity by bringing together music from every continent into one album. In doing so, we have a diversity of nationalities, gender, genres, and styles – and we have explored some places that we normally might not think about first when programming symphonic music. All of the works are world premiere recordings, by living composers, writing music for the 21st century.

Miguel Harth-Bedoya

Robert FOKKENS (b. 1975, South Africa):

Uhambo Olunintsi ('Journeys') (2002)

Uhambo Olunintsi was commissioned by the Southern African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) Endowment for the National Arts 2002, and premiered by the South African National Youth Orchestra under Conrad van Alphen at the University of Johannesburg in July 2005. It is dedicated to the memory of Professor Gérard van de Geest.

Uhambo Olunintsi is a meditation on the nature of cycles, particularly on the fascinating tension between the progress and stasis that they generate. The piece is built on a single rhythmic pattern, which is repeated, varied and constantly reinterpreted, sometimes through gradual changes, at other points through abrupt shifts of mood.

The scoring is for full orchestra with optional chorus (the version heard on this recording is without the chorus) and explores this idea of uncertain, cyclic journeys playfully and with a positive energy. In this performance the choir's parts are in the brass, entering as the orchestra reaches its first climax, and then re-appearing towards the end.

Robert Fokkens
www.robertfokkens.co.uk

Ľubica ČEKOVSKÁ (b. 1975, Slovakia):

Shadow Scale (2005)

Shadow scale was commissioned by the *Orchestre de Picardie / Orchestra Network for Europe (ONE)* in France. The piece was premiered by the *Slovak Sinfonietta Žilina*, as the co-partner of the project, conducted by *Oliver von Dohnányi* in 2006 at *La Maison de la culture d'Amiens*.

Shadow scale is a very emotional piece. It is as the title implies – the scale with its shadow, a kind of basement where the main role plays the narrative character of the main melody link, which step by step merge into a kind of polyphony of 'dialogues' with other instruments. These musical 'chats' occur on the scale, which determines the flavour of the harmony.

Ľubica Čekovská
www.cekovskalubica.com

Harry STAFYLAKIS (b. 1982, Canada):

Brittle Fracture (2013)

Brittle Fracture was awarded a 2013 Sir Ernest MacMillan Award by the SOCAN Foundation. Selected for the *American Composers Orchestra's 2014 Underwood New Music Readings*, it was performed on 7 June 2014, led by *George Manahan*, and presented as part of the *New York Philharmonic's 2014 Biennial*. It received its world premiere on 8 May 2013 in *Elebash Hall, New York*, with *Whitney E. George* conducting.

In the field of materials science, the study of fracture mechanics makes a fundamental distinction between fractures that occur at different levels of tensile stress. In the case of brittle fracture, there is little or no apparent plastic deformation before failure occurs; in other words, cracks travel so fast that it is often impossible to tell when the material will break.

Brittle Fracture attempts to depict this type of structural failure in musical terms. Inspired by modulation and temporal manipulation techniques commonly employed in

pop music production, the piece is based on a simple four-note piano theme that is performed as if it were being processed through an echo unit. The piano's resulting spectral content is selectively captured, extended and transformed by the orchestral instruments, effectuating a long-range rhythmic, melodic, registral, articulative and dynamic intensification. Throughout this textural crescendo, the music undergoes various types and degrees of stress that attempt to disrupt the constant musical flow. At the peak of the process the music finally buckles under its own weight, causing an abrupt rupture in the structure. A series of these fractures occurs, slicing between two contrasting musical surfaces until the inevitable and complete dissolution of their constituent materials.

Harry Stafylakis
www.hstafylakis.com

Nahla Farouk MATTAR (b. 1971, Egypt):

El-Áin ('The Evil Eye') (2005)

El-Áin was composed late in 2005 and premiered in February 2006 by the *Cairo Symphony Orchestra* at the *Cairo Opera House*.

The intersection of myth and scientific facts was the inspiration behind this piece. As a myth, the 'Evil Eye' (envy / gaudiness) is ingrained in many cultures as a way to intuitively explain any sudden unexpected human mannerism. On the other hand, science has recently revealed the sensitivity of life systems and the difficulty of predicting their behaviour over a long period of time. It has also informed us about the general discreet shape of that behaviour, explaining the non-linear interaction and sensitivity to surrounding parameters, resulting in special combinations of bifurcations that will end in chaotic moments or in reaching a stability point.

The title *El-Áin* is taken from an Egyptian/Arabic expression, which literally means 'The Eye', but really means 'Evil Eyes'. *El-Áin* is a concise and intense concerto-like work, which includes two xylophones pitted against the full orchestra. It begins with consecutive

moments of bifurcations and chaos, and soon returns to the stability point, to begin again its cycle indicating the hunting of the 'Evil Eye'. The bifurcation is evoked musically by contrapuntal lines in clustered harmony on one of the Egyptian enigmatic melodic modes – *Maqam Nawa Athar*, within various instrumental colours.

Nahla Farouk Mattar
www.nahlamattar.com

Carlos ZAMORA (b. 1968, Chile):

Sikuris (1999) (version for chamber orchestra, 2009)

The first version of Sikuris was written for large orchestra in 1999 to compete in the third edition of the competition promoting new works by Chilean composers in association with the Chile Symphony Orchestra. The version on this recording was adapted for chamber orchestra in 2009 and chamber ensemble in 2011, by special request of the *Caminos del Inka* ensemble.

The motif upon which the work is built was compiled in San Pedro de Atacama. The indigenous people of the region are known as the Atacameños, Lican Antay or Kunza (this last word refers to their language, now extinct, the *kunza*). The work unfolds in three sections that follow one another without pauses. The first, in alternating bars of two and three beats, is energetic and rhythmically aggressive. In the second section, the melody is accompanied by placid sounds of inevitable tonal character. Finally, the third section is cheerful and imitates the typical brass bands of highland festivals.

Sikuris was premiered by the Chile Symphony Orchestra in the same year of the competition. It has been included in the concert seasons of all Chilean professional orchestras, played by major orchestras in Latin America, the United States and Europe, and has been performed and recorded by an ensemble of electric guitars.

Carlos Zamora
www.carloszamora.scd.cl

Chris GENDALL (b. 1980, New Zealand):

Gravitas (2010–11)

Gravitas was composed during the 2010–11 Creative New Zealand/Jack C. Richards Composer-in-Residence at the New Zealand School of Music at the request of Hamish McKeich and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

This work's 'gravitas' (characterising quality or attribute) refers to the phenomenon in music where the most prominent or audible elements at any moment in a piece differ from those most important to its construction. (The latter often behave as poles to which the former gravitate.)

Chris Gendall
www.chrisgendall.com

Aigerim SEILOVA (b. 1987, Kazakhstan):

Pendulum. Evaporation (2015)

Composed for the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel, Pendulum. Evaporation was premiered by the Philharmonie der Nationen and Israel Sinfonietta with Sofia Falkovich, cello, conducted by Yoel Gamzou on 16 October 2016 in Miralles Saal, Hamburg.

'... If it [opinion] goes past the centre of gravity on one side, it must go a like distance on other; and it is only after a certain time that it finds the true point at which it can remain at rest.'¹

Arthur Schopenhauer

Pendulum. Evaporation concentrates largely on expressive elements, that are played several times by the solo cello, and serve harmonically and melodically as the 'heart of the piece'. As a composer, I am always looking for ways to use the textural development of my musical material in such a way that harmonic expanse is created in which musical time seems to be suspended. At the centre is the reflection of a state of existence: hanging in the air, sometimes tense, unresolved and yet calm, and fragile at the same time.

Time is wide and stretched in this world of sound, without a particular direction and needs attention to be realised.

Aigerim Seilova
www.aigerimseilova.com

Chen ZHANGYI (b. 1984, Singapore):

of an ethereal symphony (2015)

Commissioned by the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, of an ethereal symphony was written for the orchestra's 2016 European tour to Dresden and Prague, among other cities.

The concept behind of an ethereal symphony is that it is a movement of a larger symphonic work that explores the idea of cosmic motion of otherworldly places. I was very much inspired by the text of *Eternal Song* penned by a fellow Singaporean composer Alicia de Silva, in which the text 'ethereal symphony' sparked my musical imagination. The delicately celestial textures in this piece also recall a memory of my late grandfather, who once commented 'we are living in a place that is quite like paradise'.

Chen Zhangyi
www.chenzhangyi.com

Miguel del ÁGUILA (b. 1957, Uruguay):

The Giant Guitar, Op. 91 (2006)

Written in 2006, The Giant Guitar was jointly commissioned by WNED-FM, Buffalo, NY and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra for the 2006 JoAnn Falletta International Guitar Concerto Competition. It was premiered at Kleinhans Music Hall, Buffalo in 2006 by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by JoAnn Falletta.

The Giant Guitar is a short overture-like work inspired in the guitar and Andean folk idioms. Having lived the first 20 years of my life in South America I can't think of a guitar without associating its music to my early memories there. I often view South America as a 'giant guitar' – friendly, sentimental, nostalgic, apparently weak, and yet concealing a great power, only suggested by occasional *rasgueado* chords or historical revolutions, as in the

political events of the 1970s. Thus this work starts in a somewhat nostalgic mood, which seems to transport us to a place high in the Andes. After these few introductory bars the flutes re-introduce the guitar theme, now in a very rhythmic pattern resembling an Inca Andean flute chant. The orchestra strings accompany the melody through rhythmically complex pizzicatos, imitating a giant guitar or charango. The drama begins almost unnoticed as the originally delicately strummed chords turn into violent bass drum and timpani hits. A final chord, a third

higher than the rest of the piece, offers a last note of defiance as it confronts a police siren, only to be quickly crushed by the overwhelming percussion.

Miguel del Águila
www.migueldelaguila.com

¹ Arthur SCHOPENHAUER (1788–1860):
The Essays of Arthur Schopenhauer – Studies in Pessimism
(trans. Thomas Bailey Saunders) (Kessinger Publishing, 2004)

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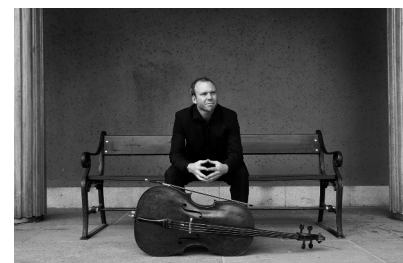
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Filarmonika / www.filarmonika.com [5], www.chrisgendall.com [6],

www.aigerimseilova.com [7], www.chenzhangyi.com [8],

The Giant Guitar, composed by Miguel del Águila © PEERMUSIC III LTD, courtesy Of Peermusic Classical GmbH [9]

Audun André Sandvik



Audun André Sandvik is much in demand as a soloist, chamber musician and cello teacher. He came to international attention with his release of sonatas by Shostakovich and Rachmaninov (LAWO Classics, 2017), recorded with pianist Sveinung Bjelland. Sandvik has also appeared as a soloist with the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra. He is professor of cello at the University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway, and for many years was a cello teacher at the Norwegian Academy of Music. He plays a cello from 1695, built in Rome by Giorgio Taninger.

Norwegian Radio Orchestra



Photo: Anna-Julia Granberg

The Norwegian Radio Orchestra has a remarkably diverse repertoire, and is doubtless the orchestra heard most often within Norway, across all medias, and at its many and diverse venues around the country. It is a flexible ensemble, playing everything from symphonic and contemporary classical music to pop, rock, folk and jazz, and collaborates with outstanding musicians in all genres. For several years, the orchestra has performed together with internationally acclaimed artists at the Nobel Peace Prize Concert, which has aired to millions of viewers worldwide. The orchestra comprises highly talented classical instrumentalists, yet its musical philosophy has remained the same: versatility, a light-hearted approach, a curiosity for all kinds of music, and an unwillingness to pigeonhole musical styles. Miguel Harth-Bedoya served as the orchestra's chief conductor from 2013 to 2020, bringing new and exciting South American and international repertoire to Norwegian concert halls.

www.nrk.no/kork/norwegian-radio-orchestra-1.12413761

Miguel Harth-Bedoya

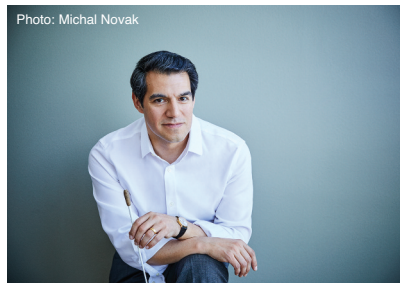


Photo: Michal Novak

Celebrating more than 30 years of professional conducting, Miguel Harth-Bedoya has recently concluded tenures as chief conductor of the Norwegian Radio Orchestra and music director of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra. He regularly conducts prestigious American orchestras including the Chicago and Boston Symphony Orchestras and the New York Philharmonic. He has also nurtured close relationships with orchestras worldwide, including the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, MDR-Sinfonieorchester and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. Harth-Bedoya has also led productions with the English National Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Minnesota Opera. Teaching is a high priority for him, including conducting workshops at Le Domaine Forget and Boston University Tanglewood Institute. Additionally, he has created the Summer Orchestral Conducting Institute (SOCI). He is also the founder and artistic director of Caminos Del Inka. Harth-Bedoya's discography spans over 25 recordings, including critically acclaimed albums on Harmonia Mundi, Deutsche Grammophon, Decca, FWSO Live, LAWO Classics, Naxos and MSR Classics. Born and raised in Peru, he received his Bachelor of Music from the Curtis Institute of Music and his Master of Music from The Juilliard School, both under the guidance of Otto-Werner Mueller.

www.miguelharth-bedoya.com

Peruvian-born, American-trained conductor Miguel Harth-Bedoya, is inspired to look at how music, like the poetic concept of peace, can unite the world. The idea behind *Journeys* is to create an example of that unity in a tangible form by bringing together music from every continent into one album. With works inspired by myths and mechanics, cosmic motion and human emotion, originating from Europe and the Americas to Africa, Asia and Australasia, the themes in this collection of world premiere recordings range as widely as their origins.

JOURNEYS

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WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS

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Full recording and publishers' details can be found inside the booklet.

Booklet notes: Miguel Harth-Bedoya and the composers

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