



AnEarful

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Preview

- 1 So Long Art Decade 05:25
William Britelle, Michi Wiancko
- 2 Mikros 03:13
Anna Thorvaldsdottir, Gyða Valtýsd
- 3 Earthing – Dead Wasps (O 12:59
Clara Iannotta, JACK Quartet
Sextet No. 2 "Apocillias a M

Christopher Cerrone - Liminal Highway I don't want to hang too much verbiage on this piece, which for 16 mesmerizing minutes gives us a whole world of sound created by flute - brilliantly played by Tim Munro - and live electronics. I will simply say that since its inception as a slender bamboo reed in the Zhou Dynasty nearly 3,000 years ago, to the addition of keys in 18th century London, to Varese's groundbreaking solo Density 21.5, the flute has been reinvented many times. And so it is again. For the full experience of Liminal Highway, which was premiered in 2015, be sure you watch the [video](#), filmed on the ruins of the SS United States in Philadelphia Harbor, and read John K. Samson's poem of the same name.

Christopher Cerrone - Goldbeater's Skin Originally commissioned and premiered by Third Coast Percussion in 2017, this gorgeous song cycle for percussion and soprano finally gets a recording by Sandbox Percussion and Elspeth Davis. They do a wonderful job of it as well, creating an atmosphere either diaphanous or almost mechanical, as directed by Cerrone's imaginative orchestration, which has them playing horizontal guitars at times, amidst the bells, vibraphones, marimbas, etc. Davis appears to be completely absorbed in the melodies, which set the words of poet G.C. Waldrep in a way that feels wholly natural. Goldbeater's Skin also comes with a [beautifully filmed performance video](#), which may be the ideal way to first experience the piece. Between this, Liminal Highway, and High Windows, which appeared on the String Orchestra of Brooklyn's Afterimage [earlier this year](#), Cerrone is having a heckuva year!

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LEGACY LOOKS

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recordings of three string quartets, two chamber works, and a piece for solo guitar and electronics, this is a deeply involving introduction to the sound world of a young Icelandic composer. The performances, by the [Siggi String Quartet](#), an ad hoc ensemble ([Emilía Rós Sigfúsdóttir](#) (flute), [Geirprúður Ása Guðjónsdóttir](#) (violin), [Helga Björg Arnardóttir](#) (Clarinet), and [Tinna Thorsteinsdóttir](#) (piano)), and guitarist [Gulli Björnsson](#), are stylish and expert, and the Sono Luminus recording captures each knock, breath, twang, swoop, and glide, with warmth and clarity. Smáráson excels at tension and release, but with the naturalism of a great storyteller rather than a showy romanticism, drawing you in with fragmentary glimpses of melodies in dramatic fashion. I'm continually finding new textures and moments to love here, turning them over in my mind like dark gemstones. Embrace the glitter and gleam.

Third Sound - Heard In Havana In the now-halcyon days of 2015, this [kickass NYC chamber group](#) traveled down to Cuba on a grant from the American Composers Forum to present the first concert of contemporary American music since Castro's revolution. There was exchange of ideas, meetings between Cuban and American composers, and a sense of the world moving past some of its long-held disagreements. Of course, much of that is but a memory in 2020, but at least we have this gloriously varied collection of music by ten composers ranging in age from 63 to 31, all of whom make use of the forces in their own unique ways. My taste has me most attracted to the edgier works, like Spencer Topel's four-movement *Details On The Strasbourg Rosace*, which finds him applying much the same ideas of his electronic work to the acoustic setting, or Christopher Wendell Jones' *A Crowd Of Twisted Things*, which constantly seems in danger of sliding right off the sheet music in a tumble of delicate notes, or the spooked theatrics of *Mieko* by Kai-Young Chan. I'm also glad to have Ingrid Arauco's *Fantasy-Quartet*, which I called "sparkling, astringent, and colorful," when I heard it at the Miller last year, available for on-demand listening. If I had one minor complaint, it's that Patrick Castillo, the founder of Third Sound (and my colleague in Hotel Elefant), didn't include one of his own works. I've heard too many sweet chamber pieces by him just once and they deserve to be preserved in a recording as wonderful as what we have here. Note: while this music was all "heard in Havana," these recordings were made in New York the year following Third Sound's trip. Here's to a future where such cultural transport is commonplace.

Jacob Cooper - Terrain Like Ted Hearne, Cooper's music is so comfortable with seemingly the whole world of sound, ancient to the future, that it can be hard to locate at times. For some that might be discomfiting, but I'm all about it, sensing a representation of a musical mind not unlike my own, where disco lives alongside spectralism and serialism alongside psych-rock. Unlike Hearne's [blazing maximalism](#),

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