



UUDEN MUSIIKIN LOKAKUU

Ostrobothnian Contemporary Music Festival

GROWTH

Sat 7 Oct 2023

At 5 p.m.

Oulun Lyseo Upper Secondary School



**2-8 Oct
2023**



HANDPROGRAM

WHERE COMPOSITIONS COME FROM

Panel Discussion

At 16.15–16.45

Oulun Lyseo

Panelists

Jarkko Hartikainen

Matilda Seppälä

Hannah Selin (United States)

Sara Larikka

Antti Myllyoja

Moderator

Tuomas Kettunen

Artistic Director

Uuden Musiikin Lokakuu

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**Musiikin
edistämissäätiö**



Taiteen edistämiskeskus
Centret för konstfrämjande
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BARBARA

Metronome
For Mixed Meters

2–8 Oct
UUDEN 2023
MUSIIKIN
LOKAKUU

Ostrobothnian Contemporary Music Festival



GROWTH

Sara Larikka
Michał Konopiński
Greta Ernesaks
Anne Yoncha
Marko Suorsa
Tuira Chamber Choir
Satu Korpi

Sat 7 Oct 2023
At 5 pm
Oulun Lyseo Upper Secondary School

PROGRAM

Sara Larikka (born 1992)

Puu ja tuulet (2023) (Premiere)

5'

The Tree and The Winds

Sara Larikka, piano

Michał Konopiński, clarinet

Greta Ernesaks, cello

Anne Teikari (born 1989)

Elämä siilon ympärillä (2023)

3'

Life Around the Silo

(Suvi Nurmi & Anne Teikari) (Premiere)

Tuira Chamber Choir

Conducted by Satu Korpi

Hannah Selin (s. 1996)

Suon laulu (2023) (Kalevala) (Premiere)

11'

The Song of the Swamp

Tuira Chamber Choir

Conducted by Satu Korpi

Video art Anne Yoncha

Programming Brian Givens

Marko Suorsa

Forbidden Forest (2023) (Premiere)

12'

A music piece for media

I Strange Birds

Outoja lintuja

II Fungal Undergrowth

Sienialuskasvillisuus

III The Witch and Her Minions

Noita ja kätyrit

Ringing of Souls of the Forest trees

Sara Larikka (born 1992, Kemi) is a pianist and composer from Oulu who works as a piano teacher at the Oulu Conservatory.

Sara Larikka graduated as a music pedagogue from Oulu University of Applied Sciences, where her piano teacher was Jouko Tötterström. Sara Larikka completed a Master's degree in the same institution in the Author and Developer of Art programme. She originally began her piano studies with Virve Räisänen at the Meri-Lappi Academy of Music. Sara Larikka has received private lessons from Joonas Pohjonen.

Sara Larikka has performed in productions of the Chamber Musicians of Oulu Symphony Orchestra, Uuden Musiikin Lokakuu and the Northern Opera Company and is active in concerts in Northern Finland.

Larikka has received composition lessons from Jouko Tötterström and Joonas Pohjonen. Larikka's works have been performed at the Uuden Musiikin Lokakuu festival for several years. Sara Larikka publishes her music on her eponymous YouTube channel.

The composer talks about her work **Puu ja tuulet (2023)**:

In fairy tales, folktales and romantic descriptions of nature, the forest is often described as having a spirit or a soul, a higher consciousness. The idea is evocative and I feel that trees in particular are sensitive, individual beings. My work **Puu ja Tuulet (2023)**, in English **The Tree and The Winds**, depicts the soul of a tree, its growth and transformation under different conditions.

The main theme of the composition, the spirit of the tree, is presented by the cello at the beginning of the piece. The theme appears four times in the piece, and each instrument in the trio gets to interpret it at least once, always against a different background. In addition to the metaphor of transformation, the winds are also present in the trio in a more concrete way, blowing especially in the interlude.

The initial impetus for the work came from Uuden Musiikin Lokakuu 2022, where the US-based Bowery Trio performed works for clarinet, cello and piano. I was fascinated by the colours and dimensions of the sound of the ensemble. **Puu ja Tuulet** is the product of this enthusiasm and my first composition for the trio.

Sara Larikka



Sara Larikka.

Photo Reijo Koirikivi / Studio PSV.

A Human Being in a Changing Environment

The choral work **Elämä siilon ympärillä (2023)**, in English **Life Around the Silo**, is part of the Piippumuistoja (Pipe Memories) project, which explores the role of old industrial environments in local identity through science and art.

Researchers of the project have interviewed local residents about the feelings and memories that old industrial buildings evoke. Suvi Nurmi, an artist member of the project team, used the transcripts of the interviews as material to create an artwork for each of the target localities.

In Oulu, the silo of Meri-Toppila stood out. In Nurmi's hands, the interview transcripts were transformed into a text in which the speakers' utterances are combined into a new, poetic whole.

Composer **Anne Teikari** currently lives in Amsterdam. She has attended the Madetoja Music High School in Oulu. Nurmi and Teikari met in 2020 at the writers' residency Villa Sarkia in Sysmä and have been friends ever since. In Teikari's hands, the song lyrics took on a more compact form suitable for composing. The collaboration worked seamlessly, as if by itself.

Teikari was inspired to compose by the baselines of the research project. She reflected on the independent aspects of buildings' existence that can go unnoticed: buildings are all too obviously part of their surrounding landscape. What is permanent around the silo is the air, which varies according to the circumstances, rather than the people and the building environment, which changes.

In the poem text that Nurmi compiled, Teikari was moved by the sadness that people felt when the silo fell into disrepair. The texts also speak of the tangible passage of time, even the discouragement caused by change, and the obligation to accept change. What was surprising was how poetically people described their relationship with the silo. The changes in the building mirror the twists and turns of one's own life.

The relationship with the environment is surprisingly intimate. Yet we rarely tell others how it feels to watch the seasons change, how it feels when an old neighbouring house is demolished.

In the choral work, a rhythmic 'tän dön' soundscape forms the air around the silo, against which we hear snippets of people's stories about life around the silo.



Anne Teikari.

Anne Teikari (born 1989) graduated as a film composer from the University of the Arts in Amsterdam. She is a music researcher by training and worked as a music journalist before the dream of composing for film brought her to Amsterdam, where she now lives. Teikari's musical education began with violin, but her heart has always been set on pop and rock music, electronic dance music and folk music. For her, musical genres are a way of expressing different emotional states, which fits in with the versatile job description of a film composer.

In addition to film music, Teikari has composed for chamber ensembles and written pop songs. It is essential for her to hear the human being behind the music, and to give space to the musicians' personalities in the realisation of the works.



Suvi Nurmi.

Suvi Nurmi (born 1982) is a visual artist and author living in Vilppula. She graduated with a Master's degree from the Uniarts Helsinki's Academy of Fine Arts Site- and Situation-Specific Art programme in 2011 and with a Master's degree in Literary Studies from the University of Helsinki in 2020.

Nurmi's art is about the changing meaning of words in different situations, the demarcation between private and public, and different processes of text production. Her cross-artistic works are created in interaction with space and its users, often drawing on words and memories. As an author, Nurmi's output includes five novels, articles, plays, short stories, poems and song lyrics.



Hannah Selin.

The Swamp Sings Researched Data

Hannah Selin (born 1996) holds a Doctor of Music degree from Temple Boyer College of Music and Dance with a major in biocentric compositional techniques and a Master of Music degree from New York University with a major in viola. Selin has worked as a live composer and as a concertmaster of the Brooklyn Chamber Orchestra.

Selin won the Red Jasper Award in Musical Composition in 2022 and has served as resident composer for the CreArtBox Ensemble. She has been commissioned by KamratŌn Ensemble, SPLICE Ensemble, Chaos Incarné Trio and several other ensembles.

The composer talks about her work **Suon laulu** (2023), in English **The Song of the Swamp**:

Suon laulu (2023) is inspired by Anne Yoncha's multi-faceted eco-artwork Re:Peat. In 2019, Anne worked with researchers from the Finnish Natural Resources Institute to investigate restoration methods for peatlands. Peatlands are an important source of fuel in Finland, but at the same time they are non-renewable due to the very slow growth rate of peatlands.

Anne's score brings together data sets from unrestored and restored peatlands into two parts of the score that ring simultaneously. The piece moves from the past to the present by following two borehole samples taken from the swamp, which illustrate several decades of growth. Variations in water content, temperature and level are mapped as variables in the upper and lower parts, with the upper part representing a restored peat bog and the lower one an unrestored one.

The initial concept of Anne's choral work involves an antiphonally localised performance in which half of the choir sings on the unrestored peat field and the other half sings on the restored marsh directly opposite.

I have taken many liberties in re-imagining Anne's graphic score for the choir: perhaps the greatest of these is to include a folk poem from Elias Lönnrot's Kanteletar. I also seek inspiration from the Finnish musical tradition, especially the kantele. I ask the singers to play a plucked string instrument of their choice for the accompaniment: in Finland it is almost certainly the widely used kantele.

The form of the piece follows the dynamic markings of Anne's score, which represent the fluctuations of the water level in peatlands. Opening melody and other wordless melodies in the work are transcriptions of the reflection data from Anne's hyperspectral camera in Anne's score. At certain points I have directly incorporated extracts from Anne's graphic score, where the singers improvise wordless melodies.

Hannah Selin

Data from the Layers of the Swamp Makes up the Picture

Video artist **Anne Yoncha** and programmer **Brian Givens** have created the video for **Suon laulu** using the same hyperspectral camera image from which Hannah Selin has made a graphic transcription for the music piece.

The material contains data on soil deposits below the surface of the earth. In the video, the pixel data scatters and reassembles into a new image that shows a whole stem of Sphagnum moss, which creates peatland. So the soil data first obscures, then reveals this peatland plant. Both images were made at the Natural Resources Institute Finland, Luke.



Anne Yoncha.

Horrors of the Forbidden Forest

Marko Suorsa (born 1977) composes electroacoustic music from concrete sounds. Suorsa studied at the Oulu Conservatory under Jukka Ruohomäki in the 1990s. His output includes dozens of works and three CD releases. Suorsa has collaborated with dancer-choreographer Jouni Järvenpää and record producer Pentti Dassum in a project called SM/DP, which has resulted in several co-releases.

The composer talks about his work **Forbidden Forest (2023)**:

As the sound source for the piece I used a modular synthesizer, which I built myself with a soldering iron over the past year. I processed the final version on a computer, but I tried to preserve the spontaneity of the modular synthesizer. The strengths of modular synthesis are the ease of modulation and the rapid testing of ideas. The work could be described as a combination of microsound and naïve art. The inspiration comes from Delilah Smith's watercolour painting *Old Witch* and from excerpts of Sir Sigmund Somnir's travelogue *Mistress of the Forbidden Forest*:

'We saw multicoloured, strangely singing birds that followed our passage. The birds seemed harmless, but closer inspection showed that they were looking for signs of our weakness. Sharp teeth and claws left no doubt about the creatures' diet.'

'The undergrowth was full of mushrooms of all sizes, from small clusters to house-size gobstoppers. The air was stale and breathing became more difficult with every step. We shielded our faces from the heady mist and tried to hurry. This is a place in the forest where many have fallen into an eternal sleep.'

'She was the ugliest woman I had ever seen. The witch spoke and moved in an almost comical manner, but no one laughed when she suddenly swooped down on us, backed by supernatural monsters.'

Marko Suorsa



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