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Hanna Hohti: Seidr

Saturday 23 November 2024
1pm, Phipps Hall

Hanna Hohti viola / electronics
Anders Pohjola sound design / electronics

Tine Surel Lange (Norway, 1989)

Ginnungagap (2022) 10'

This work combines sound exploration and a magical bind rune (combination rune) symbol. The bind rune created for this piece is based on isaR, kauna, and laguR from the Elder Futhark rune alphabet and tells the story of the cosmogenic myth of Norse Mythology. In the cosmogenic story of Norse mythology life is created in Ginnungagap, the primordial void, as the cold winds of Niflheim (isaR) met with the hot sparks of Muspelheim (kauna), and life (laguR) was created. This piece is part of my ongoing work with sound choreography, where visual material and/or movements are interpreted sonically. In *Ginnungagap* the performer has specific instructions on what and how to play, all connected to areas of the symbol on the floor – visible to both the performers and the audience. The placement of the performer in the symbol also triggers the opening and closing of gates on six sound files. © Tine Surel Lange

Jesper Nordin (Sweden, 1971)

As if tied to a string (2022) 8'

What would the people who lived in the the Nordic countries a thousand years ago have thought about a fiddle player who could summon an invisible orchestra that followed every pitch being played? They would certainly have attributed this to some kind of magic, probably named it Seiðr since that word meant both magic, string and the act of magically tying something (like the cord of fate). The "Seiðr" in this piece is technology instead of magic, and

it's based around a technology I have invented called Gestrument (gesture-instrument). This technology allows for performing music within predefined rules controlled by data of some sort. That data can be from a touch screen, a motion sensor or the controls inside of a video game, but here it is actually the sound of the viola that drives the virtual orchestra that is accompanying the soloist – as if it was tied to a string. © Jesper Nordin

Perttu Haapanen (Finland, 1972)
intoNations (2022) 13'

intoNations examines the conspicuous intonations of a few well-known politicians in relation to disturbing contents of their speeches. The melodies and harmonies of the work have been filtered from the speeches of the politicians in question. Heavily amplified pauses between the speakers' words can be interpreted on the one hand as a manifestation of hate purified from the actual speech, but also as a metaphorical attempt to explore what kind of person really appears between the lines. The sound world of the viola lives on top of this angry context, trying to cope with it, as well as process it in terms of concrete elements, like intonation, rhythmical patterns and pauses. The piece was commissioned by and dedicated to Hanna Hohti and composed with the support of Kone Foundation and The Arts Promotion Centre Finland. © Perttu Haapanen

Josefine Opsahl (Denmark, 1992)
Seidr (2022) 28'

Part I Calling out for spirits
Part II Zwei Modi - Between worlds
Part III The Other World - Trance and Transcendence
Part IV Human voices
Part V Surrender

Seidr works in the intersection between the real and the surreal. 'Seidr' was a type of magic which was practised in Norse society during the Late Scandinavian Iron Age. The practice of Seidr is believed to be a form of magic which is related to both the telling and the shaping of the future. Drawing in the old Norse tradition of Seidr, the work unfolds around the solo viola as the Seidr practitioner. The viola both speaks a common (musical) language and masters strange rhymes, phrases and spells that evoke the forces of other worlds and dimensions. The Seidr practitioner was often helped in the rituals by villagers singing along with the spells to call upon spirits. In this piece, the viola player adds voice in short passages and the use of transfigured voices is prominent in the electronics throughout the piece. Through the piece the barrier between the 'real world' – represented by the acoustic viola – and a 'surreal', mythical, timeless world – represented in the evoked electronics – melts away due to the actions of the viola player as Seidr practitioner. © Josefine Opsahl

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