

**ON  
A  
GROUND**

**MICHALA PETRI**

RECORDER

**MARIE NISHIYAMA**

BAROQUE HARP



Title: "On a Ground" (2025). Oil on canvas, 30 x 24 cm. © Elisabeth Zeuthen

## ON COMMON GROUND

by Joshua Cheek

Through recent years, when touring in Japan, **Michala Petri** has often performed with the celebrated Japanese harpsichordist and harpist, **Marie Nishiyama**. Their mutual wish to make an album together became a reality just prior to the Covid lockdown, when they recorded the present album in the calm atmosphere of the **Chichibu Muse Park**, Tokyo.

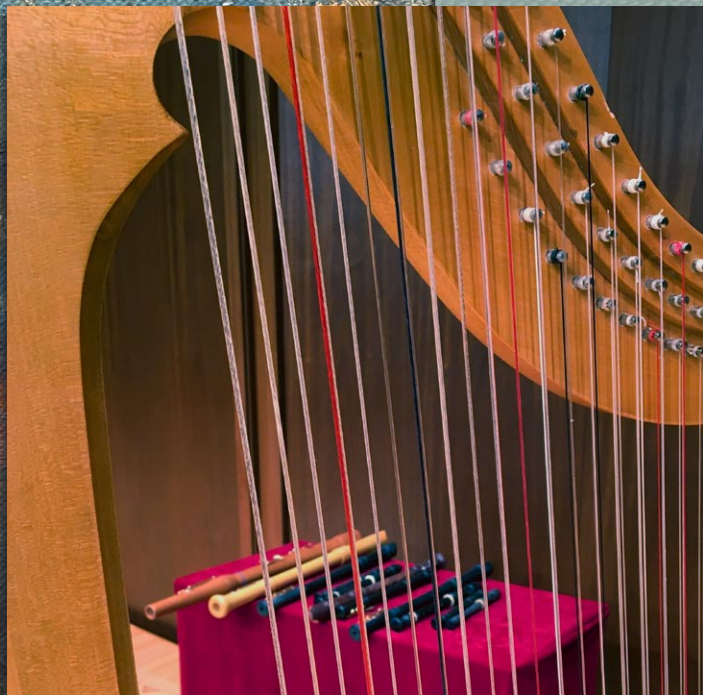
For this recording, Nishiyama plays Baroque harp. While some pieces may have been originally intended for the harpsichord, the choice of the Baroque harp better suited the artistic goals and the overall sound that both artists wished to achieve.

**The element of repetition** is one of music's most universal traits. Whether as a rhythmic pattern, part of a tune, or a complete melody, this simple formula is truly common ground to every musical culture on the planet, and has been called many different names: ostinato, chaconne, passacaglia, and of course, ground. With such an extraordinary range of music to choose from, Marie and Michala selected some of the most beautiful examples spanning works from Renaissance Spain to 21<sup>st</sup> century Denmark, exploring the intimate, healing sounds of their ancient, yet timeless instruments.



The album opens with a piece by the English composer and music publisher **Robert Carr** (17<sup>th</sup> century). His “*Divisions upon an Italian Ground*” was first published in 1686 in his popular recorder tutorial, *The Delightful Companion* and is a classic piece for the Alto Recorder. *Tollet’s Ground*, another popular ground, once thought to be an anonymous piece actually came from the pen of **Thomas Tollet** (1630-1696), a member of a remarkably musical family from Dublin. This piece as well as *Faronell’s Ground (Folia)* by the French violinist **Michel Farinel** (1649-1726) were both published in *The Division Flute*, a collection of variations over ground basses first published in 1706/1708 by John Walsh, senior in London.

**Greensleeves** needs no introduction and is undoubtedly one of the most famous English folk songs. What may not be well known is that the famous melody was set to one of the most popular ground basses of the late Renaissance and early Baroque, the *Romanesca*. Similar to the *Passamezzo* and *Folia*, a *Romanesca* is composed of a sequence of only four chords with a simple, repeating bass, providing the foundation for variations and improvisation.



Preceding Carr and the rest by more than a century is the Spanish Renaissance composer and theorist **DIEGO ORTIZ** (1510–1570). Ortiz’s masterwork is undoubtedly his monumental collection *Trattado de Glossas*, a pillar of early music literature for the viola da gamba first published in 1553. For the concluding portion of this treatise on ornamentation, Ortiz provided written-out variations on all of the popular ground bass melodies of his time: *The Folia*, the *Passamezzo* and the *Romanesca*.

The Italian Baroque composer **ALESSANDRO MARCELLO** (1669–1747) was the son of a senator, a nobleman, and enjoyed a comfortable life that gave him the freedom to pursue his interest in music. He and his brother Benedetto, were both accomplished composers, so much so that none other than **JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH** arranged Alessandro’s concerto for solo harpsichord (BWV 974). Speaking of Bach, the famous *Adagio* from his *Harpsichord Concerto in F Minor BWV 1056* was actually another “borrowed” piece, this time from the *Andante* from Georg Philipp Telemann’s (1681–1767) *Concerto for Flute/Oboe in G major, TWV 51:G2*. Bach apparently had a special affection for this gorgeous melody, since he would later arrange it once again as the opening *Sinfonia* of his church cantata, *Ich steh mit einem Fuß im Grabe*, BWV 156.



Danish guitarist, lutenist, and composer and long-time musical partner of Michala Petri, **LARS HANNIBAL** (born 1951) is represented by a quartet of short works. *Dreams*, and *Sunset Dance* (1988), explore gentle, impressionist soundscapes, whereas *Twilight* and *Waves* (2019) employ a ground structure, with Michala's recorder providing modal counterpoints.

In a similar calm mood to Hannibal's *Dreams*, are the three *Gymnopédies* by French composer **ERIK SATIE** (1866–1925). Finally, the “*Dance of the Blessed Spirits and Melody*” from *Orfeo ed Euridice* by **CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD GLUCK** is transformed into something even more elegant and graceful in Marie and Michala's arrangement.

The album concludes with Bach's beloved C Major *Prelude* from *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book 1, in the much later born French **CHARLES GOUNOD**'s added arrangement as *Ave Maria*.



## MARIE NISHIYAMA

The Japanese harpsichordist and harpist, Marie Nishiyama is one of Japan's most respected early music specialists. She began studying piano at age 3 and would go on to receive a diploma in piano and a master's degree in harpsichord from *Tokyo Music University* where she studied under Yoshio Watanabe (harpsichord) and Yoshiko Ueda (organ). Her interest in early music led her to the *Schola Cantorum Basiliensis* in Switzerland to study with Andreas Staier, Jörg-Andreas Bötticher, Rinaldo Alessandrini and Nicolau de Figueiredo (harpsichord), Heidrun Rosenzweig and Mara Galassi (historical harp), Jesper Christensen (Basso continuo and ensemble performance), and *Pedro Memelsdorff* (medieval ensemble). She further pursued her Baroque harp studies with Mara Galassi at *Scuola di Musica Civica di Milano*. In 1997 she received 1st prize in the *Early Music Kofu* in Japan. Among other awards and accolades, she won 1st prize at the 11th *Yamanashi Early Music Festival* for her harpsichord performance.





*Photo: Atsuko Ito*

Marie Nishiyama's concert activity has led her to appearances throughout Europe, Brazil and the USA. She is regularly invited to participate in international festivals and recordings for radio and television, both as a soloist and with the most prestigious orchestras and chamber groups (*Concerto Vocale*, René Jacobs, *Crawford Young*, *Ferrara Ensemble* amongst many others). She is a member of the early music ensemble *Anthonello* and an accomplished international soloist on both harpsichord and historical harp.

Marie Nishiyama's extensive discography includes several solo recordings, both in Japan and internationally. Her highly acclaimed original recording *Taner Fantasia* - Spanish keyboard music, released 1999 in Japan, made its Spanish release in 2003 on the *Enchiriadis* label and was a Critic's Choice. Each of her solo albums, *Dance du Roy et Chanson* (renaissance harp), *Lamento di Tristano* (medieval gothic harp), *Jupiter - Les orages des passions* - *Forqueray Pieces de Clavecin* and *J.S. Bach French Suites* (harpsichord) have received enthusiastic reviews. She has recorded for *Fauxbordon* and *ALM Records* (Japan), *Symphonia* (Italy), *BIS* (Sweden), *Harmonia Mundi* (France) and *Enchiriadis* (Spain). Since 2007, she has released a series of J.S. Bach's main keyboard works under the *Anthonello* label.



# MICHALA PETRI

Michala Petri started playing the recorder at the age of 3. Since the age of 17 she had a full-time international career, unusual for her instrument, and has in many countries brought the recorder to the concert stages alongside more established concert instruments. She has performed more than 5.000 concerts around the world in major concert halls and festivals and has a discography of more than 80 critically acclaimed and award-winning recordings.

Her repertoire spans the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic eras and extends into contemporary and improvised music and multi-media. More than 150 works have been commissioned and composed especially for her.

Petri's personal honors and awards include *Wilhelm Hansen Music Prize* 1998; *Léonie Sonnings Music Prize* 2000; *European Soloist Prize Pro Europa* 2005; *Knight of the Dannebrog, 1. Rank* in 2011; nominations for *Nordic Council Music Prize* 1996 and 2015; *Danish Radio Artist of the year* 2019 and *Carl Nielsen and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen Honorary Award* 2025.

Awards for her recorded work include: 4 *ECHO Klassik Awards (Deutsche Schallplattenpreis)* 1997, 2002, 2012, 2015; *Danish Music Award P2-Prize* 2006; nominations for *US-Grammy*: 2008, 2011, 2012. *ICMA* (International Classic Music Award) 2016 and *Faroese Music Award* 2016.

Since January 2015 Michala has been Vice President of the *Society of Recorder Players* (UK). For many years Michala Petri was Vice-president of the *Danish Cancer Society* and a member of the Praesidium for *UNICEF*, Denmark.



*Photo: Eric Klitgaard*

Recording, edit, mix and master: Hironori Kosaka (OMF)  
Executive producer: Lars Hannibal  
Cover notes: Joshua Cheek  
Artwork: CEZBP/OUR Recordings  
Recorded December 2019, Chichibu Muse Park, Japan  
in the DXD format.



**OUR** Recordings



## RELEASES:

- OS** Orchestra & soloist
- OE** Orchestra/Ensemble
- PH** Petri/Hannibal Duo
- LP** Vinyl
- VG** Violin/Guitar
- EP** Digital only
- CR** Choir & Recorder
- OM** Organ music
- VE** Danish National Vocal Ensemble
- RH** Recorder & Harpsichord
- SW** Spoken words
- CH** Chinese
- RC** Recorder Concertos
- BJ** Borup-Jørgensen
- IS** Instrumental solo
- ID** Instrumental duo



**IS** 8.226926



**IS** 8.226921-22



**OS** 8.226926



**IS** 6.220677-78



**ID** 8.226928



**IS** 6.220681



**ID** 8.226927



**EP** 9.70868



**IS** 8.226915  
**LP** OUR-LP003



**ID 6.220681**  
**LP OUR-LP004**



**ID 8.226919**



**ID 8.226917**



**ID 6.220683**



**OM 8.226920**



**OM 6.220675**



**PH 8.226914**  
**LP OUR-LP002**



**OE 6.220682**



**OE 8.226916**



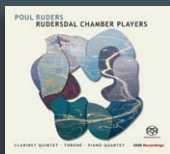
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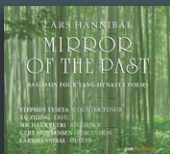
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**OE 6.220679**



**OE 6.220680**



**EP 9.70895**



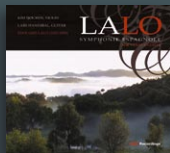
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**EP 9.70892**



VG 8.226904



VG 8.226903



VG 8.226902



VG 6.220602



PH 6.220619



PH 6.220604



PH 6.220601



PH 8.226900



OE 6.220674



OE 6.220673



OE 6.220618



OE 6.220570



EP 9.70893



EP 9.70896



EP 9.70896



EP 9.70897



CR 8.226907



CR 6.220615



VE 8.226924



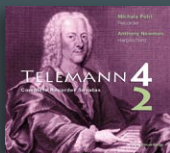
VE 6.220676



CR 6.220605



LP OUR-LP001



RH 8.226909



RH 6.220610



RC 8.226912



RC 6.220614



RC 6.220609



RC 6.220606



RC 6.220603



RC 8.226905



RC 6.220531



RC 6.220607



VE 6.220671



VE 6.220612



VE 8.226906



VE 8.226911



RH 6.220611



SW 8.226908



CH 8.226901



CH 6.220600



BJ 8.226925



BJ 6.220672



BJ 6.220617



BJ 6.220616



BJ 6.220613



BJ 6.220608



BJ 8.226910



BJ 2.110426

|                           |                                 |      |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| <b>1: ROBERT CARR:</b>    | An Italian Ground.....          | 2.55 |
| <b>2: ANONYMOUS:</b>      | Tollet's Ground .....           | 3.11 |
| <b>3: MICHEL FARINEL:</b> |                                 |      |
|                           | Faronells Ground (Folia) .....  | 5.06 |
| <b>4: ANONYMOUS:</b>      |                                 |      |
|                           | Greensleeves to a ground .....  | 4.37 |
| <b>5: DIEGO ORTIZ:</b>    |                                 |      |
|                           | Recercada Primera.....          | 1.56 |
| <b>6:</b>                 | Recercada Segunda .....         | 1.35 |
| <b>7:</b>                 | Recercada Tercera.....          | 1.59 |
| <b>8:</b>                 | Recercada Quarta.....           | 2.06 |
| <b>9:</b>                 | Recercada Quinta .....          | 2.16 |
| <b>10:</b>                | Recercada Sesta.....            | 2.01 |
| <b>11:</b>                | Recercada Settima .....         | 1.59 |
| <b>12:</b>                | Recercada Ottava .....          | 3.03 |
| <b>13: A. MARCELLO:</b>   |                                 |      |
|                           | Adagio from oboe concerto ..... | 4.07 |

|                                     |                                                                  |      |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| <b>14: J.S. BACH:</b>               | Largo from Harpsichord<br>Concerto .....                         | 2.49 |
| <b>15: LARS HANNIBAL:</b>           |                                                                  |      |
|                                     | Dreams.....                                                      | 3.13 |
| <b>16:</b>                          | Sunset Dance.....                                                | 5.12 |
| <b>17:</b>                          | Twilight on a ground .....                                       | 3.35 |
| <b>18:</b>                          | Waves - on a ground .....                                        | 4.33 |
| <b>19: ERIK SATIE:</b>              |                                                                  |      |
|                                     | Gymnopédie No. 1.....                                            | 2.53 |
| <b>20:</b>                          | Gymnopédie No. 2.....                                            | 2.12 |
| <b>21:</b>                          | Gymnopédie No. 3.....                                            | 2.04 |
| <b>22: C.W. GLUCK:</b>              | Dance of the Blessed<br>Spirits and Melody .....                 | 7.11 |
| <b>23: J.S. BACH:</b>               | Prelude in C from The Well-<br>Tempered Clavier (Harp solo)..... | 2.38 |
| <b>24: J.S. BACH / C.F. GOUNOD:</b> |                                                                  |      |
|                                     | Ave Maria.....                                                   | 2.57 |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>                       | <b>76.03</b>                                                     |      |