

Britta Bystrom

Ink- Wash On Paper

A Piece Inspired by
Seven Paintings
by Gunnel Wahlstrand
For Eight Musicians



CAT. NO 9.70870 - UPC: 730099787017

1:	LÅNGEDRAG	4.31
2:	LOOKING AT PAINTINGS	4.15
3:	THE MEADOW	2.39
4:	WALK	3.20
5:	THE END OF JULY	4.00
6:	SHALLOW WATERS	4.13
7:	ROSE	5.28
	TOTAL	28.26
8:	BY THE WINDOW	12.04



Producer, edit, mix and master: Jens U. Braun

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Liner Notes: Tor Billgren

Translation: Jenna Hultén

Executive producer: Lars Hannibal

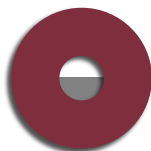
Photos from the recording: Louise Wiklund

Booklet: CEZBP/OUR Recordings

Recorded February 18-19, 2023,
Gothenburg Concert Hall (Ink Wash on Paper) and
April 30, 2023, Västerås Concert Hall (By the Window)
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Recording format: 96/24 - Selection of Neumann microphones,
RME microphone Pre-Amp and AD converter.
Magix Sequoia DAW for Editing, Mixing and Mastering.



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Liner notes by Tor Billgren:

Absence and resonance

A conversation with Gunnel Wåhlstrand (GW) and Britta Byström (BB)

GW: The day of the recording was one of the most wonderful things I ever experienced. The Tonmeister who set up the microphones, stands and cables was a little shy to begin with, but once he put his headphones on in the control room he transformed into a beautiful swan. Britta, also wearing headphones, was seated next to him, ready and holding the score. When the Tonmeister finally pressed the record button it was magical. During a break I went out and bought everyone pizzas and Danish pastries. It was eight hours of constant goose bumps.

The first seven pieces were recorded at the Gothenburg Concert Hall in February 2023, and then in April that same year By the window was played in Västerås. How did the project start?

BB: We are a trio behind all this. The idea of making something together initially came from the violinist Malin Broman, and it's thanks to her performance and musical guidance that we now have these recordings.

GW: We didn't know each other before, but I had long admired Malin as a musician and orchestral leader from going to concerts at Berwaldhallen. In 2017 I had a large exhibition at Magasin III in Stockholm which Malin and Britta attended together. That's when the idea was hatched - we should do something together. The question was what? The answer presented itself when I went to a concert where Britta had written a piece inspired by the painter Olle Bærtling. I hadn't been particularly moved by his work before, but it was as if Britta had removed the scales from my eyes with her music. I proposed that we should do



Långedrag, 2004 Wåhlstrand (Track 1)

the same thing with a selection of my paintings and have them projected in the concert hall as the music was performed.

The piece is called Ink-wash on paper, alluding to your technique. You paint using ink on watercolour paper, often in shades of sepia. What makes ink special?

GW: When the paper has soaked up the ink it's permanent, and I love that quality. I use black and coloured ink, and on the occasions where I have tried to use removable colours everything loses its meaning, its nerve. Apparently, I need an element of threat in the process to remain sharp and attentive. I keep painting the same details and surfaces over and over, each time slightly darker, it's like a rehearsal of the subject. In the end I know it by heart, and that's the whole point of it all.

BB: Imagine the horror if I had to work under similar conditions. Writing a note that is irreversible.

Images 5-7 are paintings from photos you took yourself, but the rest of them are based on old family photos, often childhood pictures of your father who died early. What made you choose these images?

GW: Those photos were my only access to my father. It became a sort of comfort blanket going through them, which is something I did every day when I was a child. Even later while I attended the Royal Academy, I did that every morning, as a way of grounding myself. After a couple of years, I realized that I needed to delve into them somehow, and I wanted to paint them to such a scale that they would make me feel small – just like when I was a child.

Gunnel has made fifty something paintings. What was your process of selection, Britta?



Looking At Paintings, 2008, Wåhlstrand (Track 2)

BB: I didn't really give it much thought; I simply picked the ones I liked the most. When I look at art in general some images seem to have a resonance, and that was the case here – some of the paintings appeared to have an inherent tone. When I subsequently laid them out in chronological order, I discovered a theme: a travel from distance to closeness. The first four pieces in the suite are landscapes viewed from afar and the interiors of a museum, while in the later ones the perspective is gradually zoomed in.

How can you interpret something like that musically?

BB: In the first piece, *Långedrag*, I focused on the remoteness in the picture – it portrays a group of people watching a landscape from afar. I have tried to represent this in the music by letting the ensemble, an octet, also be experienced as if from a distance. In the image you can't make out the facial features of anyone, hence the musicians are not stepping forward as individuals in the piece, but only as a united ensemble. Then, as it progresses, and the perspective gradually becomes more intimate in the paintings you slowly come closer to the instruments. I let the musicians be more vulnerable, like singing into the horn (*Shallow Waters*). In the seventh piece, *The Rose*, we are right up close to a white rose, looking straight into the bell. Here polyphony has become a singular line arranged in various manners. The music is much simpler than the earlier pieces, but the execution is considerably more complex.

There are numerous ways of transferring visuals to notes. You could for instance incorporate sounds that would occur in the images or approach it in terms of program music. What strategy did you apply?

BB: I wouldn't call it program music, that is a term I associate with stories. This is more about moods. The thing that really got to me in Gunnell's work is the particular relationship between darkness and light. Several of the paintings have a considerable amount of



The Meadow, 2009, Gunnel Wählstrand (Track 3)

white, and a very melancholy light which I attempted to capture. This whiteness is in fact the unpainted background emerging. It becomes an optical illusion. I have represented this unpainted sense of white using reverberation – the lingering resonance of a held note. That's why I wanted a piano in the ensemble. There is so much sustain pedal written into the music that the pianist thought it was an error, but it was intentional.

GW: The white is exciting. I love to paint blinding sunlight and glitter, because you sort of paint around it. The darkness can't get through and you end up blinded by something that isn't there. It's like light therapy, like a physical phenomenon. Afterwards you feel as if you've been out in the sun.

An image is static, like one chord, while a piece of music usually has a progression. How do you merge these dimensions?

BB: That was very much something we set out to do. To capture the moment in music in the same way it is immortalized in the art – but we also wanted to create the feeling of transportation through looking at the painting while listening to the music. The idea that music affects the gaze.

Yes, it becomes a new, or alternative way of looking at art. Both through the obvious; the tones – but also from the fact that you rarely look at a piece of art for such an extended time as the four or five minutes that the pieces last.

BB: Yes, but it's important that the pictures are allowed to be what they are. No zooming or panning, because the moment the image starts moving, the music becomes merely accompaniment. So, the images should be still while the music moves.

There is an interesting parallel in your creative process, Gunnel, where you repeat the motive time and time again to know it by heart.



Walk, 2011, Wählstrand (Track 4)

GW: Yes, it's a bit like when a musician rigorously practices a solo before a concert. I paint the same thing day in day out, and after a month or so of that it makes me feel like "I know this now". It is the very best of sensations, when I can close my eyes and just wander around in the details and know that it is all mine. Whenever I hesitate, I always remind myself that the answer is already in the picture. Just as there is an answer in the score. All you need to do is find your way there.

Cross-fertilisation of the arts like this can be eye-opening and lead to exciting findings. What have you discovered during this encounter?

BB: I have come to experience the paintings in a different way since examining them to such an extent. There is a link between Gunnel and Olle Bærtling – he too is an artist creating a world within a strict framework. With Bærtling the dogma was clear, he wrote a manifesto, but with you Gunnel, the rules are implicit. You have to discover them by yourself. It has brought me to an area of music I know I wouldn't have moved to otherwise, like entering a new world.

GW: I feel as if someone made a portrait of me, that I have been seen from a different angle – By Britta.



The End Of July, 2018 (Track 5)

Shallow Waters, 2020 (Track 6)

Britta Byström composer

Britta Byström was born in Sundsvall, Sweden 1977 and began her musical career as a trumpet player. In her teens, she began to compose music and studied composition at the Royal University of Music in Stockholm 1995-2001, where her main teachers were Pär Lindgren and Bent Sørensen.

Byström has composed for most sizes of orchestras and contexts including chamber music, vocal music and opera, but the emphasis has been on orchestral music. Some of those who have performed her music are the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Gürzenich Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. She has written pieces directly for soloists such as Malin Broman, Rick Stotijn, Radovan Vlatkovic and Janine Jansen.

Parallel Universes, a piece commissioned by BBC Proms to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Royal Albert Hall, was first performed in 2021 with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and conductor John Storgårds.

During 2024, a new violin concerto, Shortening Days, written for Janine Jansen and co-commissioned by the NDR Elbphilharmonie and the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, will have its premiere in Sweden and Germany.

<https://brittabystrom.com/>



Rose 2020. Gunnel Wählstrand. (Track 7)

Gunnel Wählstrand artist

Gunnel Wählstrand was born 1974 in Uppsala, Sweden. She lives and works in Stockholm. Between 1998-2003 she attended The Royal Academy of Arts, Stockholm.

Ever since then she has worked exclusively with ink and water on large sheets of paper, interpreting images from photographs. She seeks to enlarge, immortalize and understand places, objects and memories through meticulously recreating them.

After her graduation exhibition in 2003 she has had 12 solo exhibitions at, among others, Andréhn-Schiptjenko (Paris, Stockholm), Magasin III Museum for Contemporary Art (Stockholm), Boijmans Van Beuning (Rotterdam), Parasol Unit foundation for contemporary art (London), Nordiska Akvarellmuseet (Skärhamn) and Uppsala Konstmuseum.

She has been part of 13 group exhibitions at, among others, the 17th Biennale of Sydney, Australia and Scandinavia House Foundation in New York, USA.

She is represented by, among others, Hilti Art Foundation (Liechtenstein), the UBS Art Collection (Zürich), Magasin III Museum for Contemporary Art (Stockholm), Malmö Konstmuseum, Moderna Museet (Stockholm), Nordiska Akvarellmuseet (Skärhamn), Uppsala Konstmuseum, and Statens Konstråd, Sweden.

Her most extensive solo exhibition to date will take place between October 2024 and March 2025 at Prins Eugens Waldemarsudde in Stockholm, Sweden.

<https://www.gunnelwahlstrand.com>



The whole team.

Malin Broman violin/viola

Malin Broman is much in demand as an artistic director, soloist and chamber musician. Born in Sweden, Malin completed her studies in London with David Takeno. A passionate chamber musician, she has toured and recorded extensively for the last twenty years as a member of the Kungsbacka Piano Trio, Stockholm Syndrome Ensemble and Nash Ensemble of London. In 2008 Malin was appointed concertmaster of the Swedish Radio Orchestra. Since then, she has performed Brahms' double concerto with Steven Isserlis conducted by Daniel Harding, received rave reviews for her recording of Nielsen's Violin Concerto and premiered violin concerti written for her by Helen Grime, Daniel Börtz, Britta Byström, Andrea Tarrodi, Daniel Nelson and Jesper Nordin.

In 2019 she was awarded H.M the King's medal for services to music.

Malin Broman plays a 1709 Stradivarius violin, a kind loan from the Järnåker Foundation.

<https://www.malinbroman.com>

Eriikka Nylund viola

Eriikka Nylund began her violin studies at the age of 5. Viola studies at the Sibelius Academy and in Salzburg and Basel. In 2001 she won first prize at the Nordic Viola Competition in Helsinki. Since 2007 Eriikka has worked as a solo viola with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. She performs frequently as soloist with the orchestra, premiering many works, and works regularly as leading viola player with Philharmonia Orchestra in London. Eriikka is an active orchestral and chamber musician and has performed at numerous festivals in the Nordic countries and around the world. Her instrument is the Cerruti viola, owned by the Järnåker Foundation.

<https://www.turunmusiikkijuhlat.fi/en/portfolio/eriikka-nylund>

Marie Macleod cello

Marie Macleod is principal cellist of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra and enjoys a varied career as chamber musician, soloist and teacher. She is a member of the New Zetterqvist Quartet, the Lendvai String Trio and the Aronowitz Ensemble, and performs at leading festivals and concert halls throughout Europe. She has also collaborated for many years with Swedish pianist Martin Sturfält. Marie studied with Louise Hopkins at the Yehudi Menuhin School, Steven Isserlis at IMS Prussia Cove, Frans Helmerson in Cologne and David Takeno at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London. She plays a Matteo Goffriller from 1706. <https://stonerecords.co.uk/artist/marie-macleod/>

Rick Stotijn double bass

Rick Stotijn is a tireless promoter of his instrument and its sheer endless possibilities. Rick is currently the principal double bass of the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, and Lucerne Festival Orchestra. As guest principal, Rick plays regularly in the London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and Orchestra Mozart, Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

In chamber music, he has worked with Janine Jansen, Vilde Frang, Julian Rachlin, Malin Broman, Simon Crawford Philips, Lars Vogt, Christian Tetzlaff, and many many others.

He was awarded the highest accolade to a musician in the Netherlands – the Dutch Music Prize – and is a Professor at the Robert Schumann Hochschule Düsseldorf.

<https://www.rickstotijn.com>

Niklas Andersson clarinet

Niklas Andersson, clarinetist, joined the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra as principal clarinetist in 1992 after studies in Gothenburg, Antwerp and London. Niklas is a founding member of the Amadé Wind Quintet and has performed new music for 15 years with the contemporary music group KammarensembleN. He has also performed as a soloist with Swedish orchestras both at home and abroad.

Henrik Blixt bassoon

Henrik Blixt was born in 1974 and began playing the bassoon at the age of 10. After studying at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm under Professor Knut Sönstevold, Henrik received a soloist diploma in 1998 after performing André Jolivet's bassoon concerto with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. Since 2001, Henrik has been the principal bassoonist of the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. He is a founding member of the Amadé Quintet and enjoys playing contemporary Swedish music, having had several works dedicated to him.

Chris Parkes horn

Christopher Parkes is solo horn of the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Sinfonia of London. Previously a member of the London Philharmonic and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras, he has also performed as guest principal with orchestras such as the Berlin Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Symphony, London Symphony, Munich Philharmonic and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

As a soloist, he has appeared with orchestras such as the London Symphony, Philharmonia, BBC Scottish and the Swedish Radio Symphony, and with conductors including Daniel Harding, Klaus Mäkelä, Gianandrea Noseda and John Wilson.

Recordings include Britten's 'Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings' with Andrew Staples, Daniel Harding and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra (Harmonia Mundi) and 'Diagonal Music - Horn trios by Byström and Brahms' with Malin Broman and Simon Crawford-Phillips (Alba).

<https://three-worlds-records.com/artist/chris-parkes/>

Simon Crawford-Phillips piano/celesta

Simon Crawford-Phillips has forged an unusually varied career as conductor, pianist and festival director. A creative programmer he regularly collaborates with artists such as Pekka Kuusisto, Lawrence Power, Rodrick Williams and Anne Sofie von Otter in repertoire from Haydn and Schumann to Adès, Byström, Dean and Reich. His own ensembles include the Kungsbacka Piano Trio and Stockholm Syndrome Ensemble, and he is a member of the Nash Ensemble, ensemble-in-residence at Wigmore Hall. Since 2016 Simon is Chief Conductor and Artistic Advisor of Västerås Sinfonietta.

<https://www.simoncrawford-phillips.com/>

Jens Ulrich Braun tonmeister

Jens Ulrich Braun is a Tonmeister and recording producer with vast experience in audio production, video direction, and artistic consulting.

He has collaborated with many renowned musicians and orchestras and is a co-owner of Take5 Music Production in Stockholm.

Jens has produced over 600 CDs for labels such as BIS, Alpha Classics, Warner Classics, Hyperion and Ondine, and directed video productions for classical performances.

He also works as a music producer for the Swedish Radio choir and holds a Tonmeister degree from the Erich Thienhaus Institut in Germany. <https://take5-music-production.com/>





(Track 8)
By The Window, 2003
Wählstrand

