AEQUA

INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY ENSEMBLE PERFORMS ANNA THORVALDSDOTTIR

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1. **Scape** 7:44
   (2011) for piano
2. **Spectra** 9:12
   (2017) for violin, viola & cello
3. **Aequilibria** 12:22
   (2014) for large chamber ensemble
4. **Sequences** 6:09
   (2016) for bass flute, bass clarinet, baritone saxophone & contrabassoon
5. **Illumine** 7:21
   (2016) for 3 violins, 2 violas, 2 cellos & 1 double bass
6. **Reflections** 8:25
   (2016) for violin, viola & cello
7. **Fields** 5:51
   (2016) for bass clarinet, percussion, piano, electric guitar, cello & double bass

total time 57:10

Internally, I hear sounds and nuances as musical melodies and in my music I weave various textures of sounds together with harmonies and pitched lyrical material. The music is written as an ecosystem of sounds and materials that are carried from one performer — or performers — to the next throughout the progress of a work. As a performer plays a phrase, harmony, texture or a lyrical line it is being delivered to another performer as it transforms and develops, passed on to be carried through until it is passed on again to yet another. All materials continuously grow in and out of each other, growing and transforming throughout the piece.

My music is often inspired in an important way by nature and its many qualities, but I do not strive to describe or literally incorporate elements from nature in my music. To me, the qualities of the music are first and foremost musical — so when I am inspired by a particular element that I perceive in nature, it is because I perceive it as musically interesting. The qualities I tend to be inspired by are often structural, like proportion and flow, as well as relationships of balance between details within a larger structure, and how to move in perspective between the two — the details and the unity of the whole.

The pieces for smaller forces on AEQUA orbit the largest work *Aequilibria*, which is written for a chamber ensemble of 12 performers. *Aequilibria* was inspired by various states of balancing forces — by the natural breath between expansion and contraction, and the perspectives of translucence and opacity. This inspiration can be applied to the whole collection of pieces on AEQUA — the works breathe in and out of focus, expand and contract within their individual characters but reflect on each other through their various internal connections from beginning to end.

Warmest thanks for listening.

Anna Thorvaldsdottir

ANNA THORVALDSDOTTIR

Anna's music is frequently performed around the world, and has been featured at several major venues and music festivals such as Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival, the Leading International Composers series at the Phillips Collection in Washington DC, Big Ears Festival, ISCM World Music Days, Nordic Music Days, Beijing Modern Music Festival, and at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC. Her works have been nominated and awarded on many occasions – most notably, Anna is the recipient of the prestigious Nordic Council Music Prize, The New York Philharmonic's Kravis Emerging Composer Award, and Lincoln Center's Emerging Artist Award and Martin E. Segal Award.

Some of the orchestras and ensembles that have commissioned and performed Anna's works include the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Ensemble Intercontemporain, NDR Elbphilharmonie, Bang on a Can All-Stars, Avanti Chamber Ensemble, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic, and Royal Stockholm Philharmonic.

Anna holds a PhD from the University of California in San Diego.

AEQUA is the fourth portrait album of Anna's works. Her debut portrait album – *Rhízōma* – was released in 2011 through Innova Recordings; *Aerial* was released by Deutsche Grammophon in 2014; and *In the Light of Air* was released by Sono Luminus in 2015, performed by the International Contemporary Ensemble. ●

STEVEN SCHICK

Percussionist, conductor, and author Steven Schick was born in Iowa and raised in a farming family. For forty years he has championed contemporary music by commissioning or premiering more than one hundred-fifty new works. Schick is music director of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus and artistic director of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. He was music director of the 2015 Ojai Festival. He maintains a lively schedule of guest conducting including recent appearances with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Ensemble Modern and the Asko/Schönberg Ensemble. Among his acclaimed publications include a book, "The Percussionist's Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams," and numerous recordings of contemporary percussion music including a 3 CD set of the complete percussion music of Iannis Xenakis (Mode) and a companion recording of the early percussion music of Karlheinz Stockhausen in 2014 (Mode). Steven Schick is Distinguished Professor of Music and holds the Reed Family Presidential Chair at the University of California, San Diego.●

CORY SMYTHE

Pianist and Grammy award winning recording artist Cory Smythe engages a broad repertoire of new, classical, and improvised music. He has performed internationally as a soloist, as a member of the International Contemporary Ensemble, with the Tyshawn Sorey Trio, and in recital with violinist Hilary Hahn. Smythe has been featured at the Newport Jazz, Wien Modern, Nordic Music Days, Concorso Busoni, and Mostly Mozart festivals, among many others, garnering praise for "the ferocity and finesse of his technique" (*The Washington Post*).●

Aequilibria
Isabel Gleicher, alto flute
Joshua Rubin, bass clarinet
Nanci Belmont, bassoon
David Byrd-Marrow, horn
Michael Lormand, trombone
Cory Smythe, piano
Josh Modney, violin
Jennifer Curtis, violin
Wendy Richman, viola
Mosa Tsay, cello
Randy Zigler, double bass
Steven Schick, conductor

Fields
Campbell MacDonald, bass clarinet
Ross Karre, percussion
Daniel Lippel, electric guitar
Cory Smythe, piano
Mosa Tsay, cello
Randy Zigler, double bass

Illumine
Jennifer Curtis, violin
Josh Modney, violin
Gabriela Diaz, violin
Wendy Richman, viola
Kyle Armbrust, viola
Michael Nicolas, cello
Mosa Tsay, cello
Randy Zigler, double bass
Steven Schick, conductor

Reflections
Jennifer Curtis, violin
Kyle Armbrust, viola
Michael Nicolas, cello

Scape
Cory Smythe, piano

Sequences
Isabel Gleicher, bass flute
Campbell MacDonald, bass clarinet
Ryan Muncy, baritone saxophone
Rebekah Heller, contrabassoon

Spectra
Josh Modney, violin
Wendy Richman, viola
Michael Nicolas, cello

INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY ENSEMBLE

The International Contemporary Ensemble is an artist collective that is transforming the way music is created and experienced. As performer, curator, and educator, ICE explores how new music intersects with communities across the world. The ensemble's 35 members are featured as soloists, chamber musicians, commissioners, and collaborators with the foremost musical artists of our time.

A recipient of the American Music Center's Trailblazer Award and the Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, ICE was also named the 2014 Musical America Ensemble of the Year. The group currently serves as artists in residence at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts' Mostly Mozart Festival, and previously led a five-year residency at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

New initiatives include OpenICE, made possible with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which offers free concerts and related programming wherever ICE performs, and enables a working process with composers to unfold in public settings. DigitICE, a free online library of over 350 streaming videos, catalogues the ensemble's performances. ICE's First Page program is a commissioning consortium that fosters close collaborations between performers, composers, and listeners as new music is developed. EntICE, a side-by-side education program, places ICE musicians within youth orchestras as they premiere new commissioned works together. Read more at iceorg.org. ●

AEQUA

DSL-92227

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❶ *Scape* (2011) for piano. Commissioned by Tinna Þorsteinsdóttir. ❷ *Spectra* (2017) for violin, viola & cello. Commissioned by NJORD Biennale. ❸ *Aequilibria* (2014) for large chamber ensemble. Commissioned by BIT20 Ensemble. ❹ *Sequences* (2016) for bass flute, bass clarinet, baritone saxophone & contrabassoon. Commissioned by the International Contemporary Ensemble. ❺ *Illumine* (2016) for 3 violins, 2 violas, 2 cellos & 1 double bass. Commissioned by Ensemble Intercontemporain with the support of the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation. ❻ *Reflections* (2016) for violin, viola & cello. Commissioned by Nordic Affect. ❼ *Fields* (2016) for bass clarinet, percussion, piano, electric guitar, cello & double bass. Commissioned by the state foundation Villa Musica Rheinland-Pfalz for Bang on a Can All-Stars. The work *Fields* can be performed with or without subtle field recordings that, when incorporated, are played back for parts of the piece — this performance is without the field recordings.

All works written by Anna Thorvaldsdottir.
annathorvalds.com

All works performed by the International Contemporary Ensemble.
iceorg.org

Aequilibria and *Illumine* conducted by Steven Schick.
Scape performed by Cory Smythe.

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legacyaudio.com

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