

LONGING

chamber music by Maria Lithell Flyg

1.	Langtan (Longing) (2021) Ivonne Fuchs mezzo soprano, Lisa Grotherus clarinet, Lisa Långbacka accordion Filip Gloria violin I, Alva Press violin II, Erik Holm viola, Andreas Lavotha cello Vokalharmonin conducted by Fredrik Malmberg	11:53
2.	Bestigning (Ascension) (2019) Lisa Carlioth <i>soprano</i> , Niklas Andersson <i>clarinet</i> , Martin Sturfält <i>piano</i>	6:54
3.	Du är min renaste tröst (You are my purest consolation) (2020) Lisa Carlioth <i>soprano</i> , Martin Sturfält <i>piano</i>	2:4
4.	Nära ögat (Could have) (2020) Lisa Carlioth <i>soprano</i> , Niklas Andersson <i>clarinet</i> , Martin Sturfält <i>piano</i>	7:49
5.	Stjärnorna (The Stars) (2020) Lisa Carlioth <i>soprano</i> , Johanna Sjunnesson <i>cello</i> , Martin Sturfält <i>piano</i>	5:47
6.	Vid Vesuvius brant (On the Slopes of Mount Vesuvius) (2020) Stockholm Wind Quartet - Peter Gullqvist <i>bassoon</i> , Madeleine Johansson <i>flute, piccolo, J</i> ohanna Orrje <i>oboe</i> , Johan Söderlund <i>clarinet</i>	9:04

Total playing time: 44:09

Featuring:

Niklas Andersson, clarinet	tracks: 2, 4
Lisa Carlioth, soprano	tracks: 2, 3, 4, 5
Ivonne Fuchs, mezzo soprano	track: 1
Filip Gloria, violin I	track: 1
Lisa Grotherus, clarinet	track: 1
Erik Holm, viola	track: 1
Andreas Lavotha, cello	track: 1
Lisa Långbacka, accordion	track: 1
Fredrik Malmberg, conductor	track: 1
Alva Press, violin II	track: 1
Johanna Sjunnesson, cello	track: 5
Martin Sturfält, piano	tracks: 2, 3, 4, 5

Stockholm Wind Quartet (SWQ):

Peter Gullqvist, bassoon	track: 6
Madeleine Johansson, flute, piccolo	track: 6
Johanna Orrje, oboe	track: 6
Johan Söderlund, clarinet	track: 6

Vokalharmonin:

track: 1

Sofia Niklasson

Lovisa Sydén Sara Niklasson

Elias Aaron Johansson

Love Tronner

Love Lyckelin Bergman

Arvid Eriksson

Didier Linder

About the songs:

It's hard to pinpoint what makes my heart sing when I read a poem, but that's what it takes to get me composing. Another source of inspiration is to picture the musicians and singers who will be performing the piece, which is the case for the material on this album.

The pandemic brought certain things home to us: what we truly long for. Encounters with other people, experiencing music and other art forms in groups, having good health, being together.

While reading Nya dikter by Lotta Lotass, I realized that an undercurrent of longing ran throughout the poems. The images of chained circus elephants she chose to include in her collection reinforced this feeling and made me want to create music that combined the sense of longing and melancholy present in Swedish folk music with my own, more contemporary, expression.

My point of departure was female poets from 1900 to today. Fredrika Bremer is a person who led a fascinating life: a bestselling novelist in her day who was also a champion of women's rights – including her own personal liberation. She refused to marry and be legally forced to have a husband as guardian, and took her emancipation petition to the highest instance, the King. She was well-travelled and found volcanoes fascinating. The poem *Bestigning (Ascension)* by Greta Sundberg is, on one level, about hiking to the top of a volcano, but it also describes a longing for freedom and independence. Musically speaking, you feel the rumble of the volcano under your feet but also the wind in your hair as she reaches the top.

The woodwind quartet featured in On the Slopes of Vesuvius also has ties to Bremer and volcanoes. And while I was composing this piece, I was fortunate enough to be on the island of Capri, thanks to a grant that entitled me to stay at the Villa San Michele. From my window I could see both Ischia and Vesuvius.

During one of Bremer's trips to Italy, she went to see the Pope, and also went to Ischia. From my window, I could easily picture Fredrika surging up the slopes of Vesuvius as she was dealing with the elements – earth, wind, water, and fire – along with the norms of the day, the preconceptions of what women were and were not allowed to do. And now there she is, at the top of Vesuvius, her long skirts rustling in the wind.

Something I particularly loved about Stjärnor (The Stars) by Edith Södergran is a certain image she conjures up. You see, I often long for the silence of nature, and on a starry night, the stillness can be so calming and liberating. And the imagery of stars being as sharp as shards of broken glass is very intriguing – you need to tread as carefully as the breathless silence on starry nights. It was not hard to find musical ideas to suit the atmosphere and the imagery.

In the Karin Boye poem *Du är min renaste tröst* (You are my purest consolation) I was struck by the passion, that all our inherent traits can be simultaneously a strength and a source of great pain. The contrast between what's simple and straightforward and what causes pain provided a clear-cut ABA shape to the music that defines these two moods.

I happened to come across Nāra ögat (Could Have) after the terrorist attack on a shopping street in Stockholm a few years ago. Szymborska captures the fragility of life and how everything can change in an instant. Her poem has rhythm features to explore,

and it also has a theme of fundamental issues - that life means a beating heart, and that love means that your heartbeat is also mine.

Maria Lithell Flyg, Stockholm, June, 2022



Nya dikter (New poems) by Lotta Lotass, Längtan - Longing is the composer's title

ı

Kunde jag som klippan vila nöjd i stilla, stumnad stelhet, i ett slag mitt hjärta hejda och bli lik den tunga stenen. Kunde jag som bergens hällar vittra bort i tidens strömmar.

Ш

Kunde jag de slutna fängsel kasta av och liksom molnen driva hän mot himlens vidder genom ljusets fria rymder. Kunde jag som skyars skapnad tona bort i eterns luftkrets.

Ш

Kunde jag som genklang ljuda ut mot himmelsstreckens kanter, alltmer tona bort och stillna i en djup, evärdlig tystnad. Kunde jag som stumhet träda in i djupa ordlösheten.

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Kunde jag som höstens blomster vissna ned, som gräset gulna, torka och av regnets strömmar lösas upp i ler och mylla. Kunde jag som mullen mörkna och i djupet dala, sjunka.

ΙV

Kunde jag som regnet strömma ned till jordens djupa grunder, där att danas om, att flykta åter ut i havens famnar. Kunde jag som strida flöden stillna i det bottenlösa.

VΙ

Kunde jag som svunna vännen omhöljas av flodens vatten, känna strömmarna som lisar svalka mina trötta lemmar. Kunde jag som ljusets spegling skimra bort längs fors och fåra.

VII

Kunde jag som stenen vittra och bli sand på havets stränder, där att sköljas bort av brottsjö, bäras undan av en bränning. Kunde jag som minsta grandet svinna bort bland oceaner.

ΙX

Kunde jag som vinden rusa, låta stoftet dansa, virvla, (piska havets djupa vatten, lyfta det i dyningsböljor. Kunde jag som storm och störtsjö domna bort i bleke, stiltje.)

Bestigning (Ascension), poem by Greta Sundberg

Längst upp tar du dig Står där, andfådd Din tunna gestalt Svart öken, stumt slam Du. i dina bylsiga kjolar

Kala slätt, Denna rungande tystnad Tunn rök, först: en viskning Plötsligt regn, av gnistor! Ett muller och: Glödande floder, som ormarströmmar stritt, blir till tunga vågor Ditt hjärtas hopp lyfter-

Du är min renaste tröst (You are my purest consolation), poem by Karin Boye

Du är min renaste tröst du är mitt fastaste skydd du är det bästa jag har ty intet gör ont som du Nej, intet gör ont som du Du svider som is och eld Du skär som ett stål min själ – Du är det bästa jag har

Nära ögat (Could have), poem by **Wislawa Szymborska**, translation into Swedish by **Anders Bodagård**

Det kan ha hänt.
Det måste ha hänt.
Det har hänt förr. Senare.
Närmre. Längre bort.
Det har hänt, men hände inte dig.

Du blev räddad, för du var först. du blev räddad för du var sist För du var ensam. För det fanns folk.

För det blev regn. För det blev skugga. För det var soligt väder.

Som tur var fanns där skog. Som tur var fanns där inga träd.

För du gick åt vänster. Åt höger.

Som tur var – en skena, en krok, en bjälke, en broms, en dörrsmyg, en sväng, millimeter, sekund. Som tur var flöt ett halmstrå på vattnet.

Följden var, och därför, och ändå, trots allt. Hur skulle det ha gått om en hand, en fot, ett tuppfjät, en hårsmån från ett sammanträffande.

Så du är här? Raka vägen från ett andrum? En maska hade nätet och den slank du igenom? Jag kan inte nog förvånas, är förstummad. Hör bara hur ditt hiärta bultar i mid.

Stjärnorna (The Stars), poem by Edith Södergran

När natten kommer står jag på trappan och lyssnar, stjärnorna svärma i trädgården och jag står ute i mörkret. Hör, en stjärna föll med en klang! Gå icke ut i gräset med bara fötter; min trädgård är full av skärvor.



Maria Lithell Flyg

Maria Lithell Flyg is a composer of contemporary music who holds a master's degree in composition from the Royal College of Music in Stockholm.

Maria has received commissions for some of Sweden's finest ensembles and musicians, such as members of the Royal Orchestra at the Royal Swedish Opera; members of the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra; Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Wind Quintet; Cecilia Zilliacus; Olle Persson; David Huang, ensemble recherche (Germany); Sofia Vokalensemble; Adolf Fredrik Girls' Choir; Kammarensemblen; Emmanuel Laville; Sebastian Stevensson; Asuka Nakamura; Stockholm Saxophone Quartet; Alexandra Zetterström Büchel; Ivo Nilsson; Anna Lindal; and Tora Thorslund. to name a few.



In June 2019, her album Collected Chamber Music (Footprint Records/Naxos) was well-received upon release.

On May 29, 2022, her short opera *Min tur nu* (My Turn Is Now) opened at the **Royal Swedish Opera**, as part of their Short Stories III series. The piece received glowing reviews in the two major Swedish dailies DN and SvD.

Maria has also composed the 35-minute-long requiem to biodiversity Frid-lyst for **Sofia Vokalensemble**, led by Bengt Ollén. This concert was recorded by SR, Swedish Radio and was broadcast April 6, 2022.

Maria has a sensitivity that enables her to provide space and focus for each instrument and musicians appreciate her ability to bring out what's special about their particular instrument.

In 2021 Maria was awarded the City of Stockholm Culture Grant for her "valuable contribution to the arts".

Niklas Andersson, clarinet

Niklas Andersson has presided as principal clarinet in the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra since 1992, following five years as principal clarinet in the symphony orchestras of Trondheim, Norway and Helsingborg, Sweden. For 15 years, Niklas was also a member of the prominent contemporary music ensemble KammarensembleN where he performed at a great number of premieres.

When it comes to chamber music, he has been a member of notable quartets such as Tale kvartetten, Lysellkvartetten, Zetterqvistkvartetten, and the Stenhammar Quartet, along with the Skampa Quartet from the Czech Republic. Composers such as Daniel Nelson and Victoria Borisova-Ollas have composed music for him, and he has been a featured soloist in clarinet concertos by Mozart, Copland, Wallin, Nelson, Henze, and Nielsen.



© Louise Agnani

Niklas graduated from the Academy of Music and Drama at the University of Gothenburg, where he studied under Sten Pettersson, and later went on to study under Walther Boyekens in Antwerp, and John McCaw in London

Lisa Carlioth, lyrical soprano

Lisa Carlioth was born and raised in Stockholm. As of 2011, she combines freelancing with singing in the Swedish Radio Choir. The Swedish soprano has studied at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm; the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London; and at the Opera Section of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama in Glasgow.

During her college years, she also received a scholarship that enabled her to take part in Master Classes taught by Benjamin Luxon, Graham Johnson, and Felicity Palmer.

Lisa has performed at many venues, such as the Barbican, London; Linbury Studio at Covent Garden; and with Andrew Parrott & the Taverner Consort at the Ediboral Festival. She was also a soloist at an inauguration soirée for La Seine Musical in Paris.



Some noteworthy operatic roles are Alcina (La Liberazione di Ruggiero) at St John's Smith Square; as well as Mimi (La Bohème) and Michaela (Carmen) at the Scottish Opera. In Sweden, Lisa has appeared at Läckö Slott in the role of Alice (Falstaff); and with Folkoperan, as Amelia (in Verdi's A Masked Ball) and Miss Schlesen (Satyagraha). On a somewhat different note, Lisa is also interested in energy work. She has studied shamanism and healing and puts it into practice using her voice as a tool.

Ivonne Fuchs, mezzo soprano

German-Swedish mezzo soprano Ivonne Fuchs received her higher education at the Hochschule für Musik in Detmold; the Royal College of Music in Stockholm; and the University of Opera in Stockholm. Within just a few years, she has made a name for herself as an internationally acclaimed opera and concert singer.

Ivonne has performed Händel at the Drottningholm Slottsteater in Stockholm, as well as Wagner at La Scala, the Berlin Staatsoper, and the BBC Proms. Her versatility, with a repertoire spanning Bach, Händel, Mendelssohn, Verdi, and Mahler, has made her very much in demand.

In 2012, she was awarded the Birgit Nilsson scholarship, and in 2015, she received a grant from the Friends of Drottningholms Slottsteater.



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Ivonne Fuchs has been featured in numerous recordings, such as Johan Ludwig Bach's *Trauermusik*, released by Harmonia Mundi France; Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, released in 2015 by Capriccio Deutschlandfunk, and the album of Beniamin Britten material *Voice & Guitar* was released in 2016 by Proprius Sweden.

Ivonne is a passionate "Lied" singer. Along with the pianist Anna Christensson, she came first place in the competition *Ordet & Tonen*, and she's appeared at several chamber music festivals all over Sweden and Germany.

Filip Gloria, violin I

Filip Gloria began playing the violin at the age of ten and later went to the Royal College of Music in Stockholm where he studied under teachers such as Anna Lindal and Cerilia Tilliacus

Filip is a freelance musician who has played in many major orchestras in Sweden, such as Folkoperan, the Royal Swedish Opera, Dalasinfoniettan, Norrlandsoperan, Västerås Sinfonietta, Norrbotten Chamber Orchestra, and Nordiska Kammarorkestern. Filip has also been a concertmaster at the Summer Opera circuit at Vadstena and for Norrbotten Chamber Orchestra.



Lisa Grotherus, clarinet

Lisa Grotherus is an acclaimed clarinettist, singer and composer who writes music for radio shows, films, and the stage, as well as for her own bands. She moves fluidly between genres and also switches between her main instruments - clarinet and bass clarinet - to tenor saxophone and singing.

Lisa Grotherus has a background in jazz, folk, and improvisational music, and often works with various art forms like dance, art, and poetry at venues such as the Royal Dramatic Theatre and the Stockholm City Theatre.

Many awards have come her way, and in 2019, she received the SKAP jazz award. In 2018, her debut album Dekontee was released. Music magazine Lira selected it as the Best Swedish Jazz Album of the Year, and it made the top ten in the category Best Album of the Year by the Gothenburg Post.



Erik Holm. viola

Erik Holm is a freelance musician based in Stockholm. He is a graduate of the Royal Swedish College of Music in Stockholm, and studied under Nicola Zidarov. Erik regularly gets work from the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonics, the Royal Swedish Orchestra, the Gäyle Symphony Orchestra, Norrlandsoperan, and Västerås Sinfonietta. In 2012, he was employed for a year as a concertmaster by Nordiska Kammarorkestern and Nordiska Kammarensemblen. Frik has also toured with acts such as Brian Wilson, Love, Belle & Sebastian Heart, and Laleh. He is also in demand as a studio musician and has been featured on various recordings and TV productions.



Andreas Lavotha, cello

Andreas Lavotha studied music in Stockholm, at the Royal Swedish College of Music, and at the Prague Conservatory. He's very active as a chamber musician, performing at venues such as the Guggenheim Museum, the Mumbai Cultural Center, and Wigmore Hall. He's been awarded several scholarships from schools and associations such as the Royal Swedish College of Music and the Freemasons.

Along with his duo partner, the pianist Christopher Hästbacka. Andreas is the artistic director of the Askanas Chamber Music Festival and the Askanas Chamber Ensemble In 2021, they received the Ekerö Municipality Culture Prize and were also awarded a grant from the Royal Swedish Music Academy.



Lisa Långbacka, accordion

Lisa Långbacka received her higher education at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm. Her musical foundation is folk music, but she moves effortlessly between various worlds - from pop, jazz, and folk to opera and stage productions.

Crowned Accordionist of the Year by the Swedish Accordionist Association, Lisa's toured with acts as disparate as Lena Willemark, Tomas Ledin, the Cullberg Ballet, and Musica Vitae

In 2017, Lisa Långbacka was the musical director for the Nobel Prize Banquet, where she also performed her own music.

SR. Swedish Radio, commissioned a piece from Lisa Långbacka in 2019. Transformations, for piano, string quartet, and accordion. And in addition, she is half of the duo known as LISAS. Their album Fiddle & Accordion Conversations was described by music magazine LIRA as being "one of the most important folk music albums of the century".



Fredrik Malmberg, conductor

A passion for unusual repertoire, combined with an expertise and the instinctive understanding of a wide range of periods and styles, is the hallmark of the Swedish conductor Fredrik Malmberg.

Active both as a choral and an orchestral conductor, he has worked with ensembles such as, DR Vocalensemblet; Swedish Radio Choir; MDR Radio Choir; Lautten Compagney Berlin; Concerto Copenhagen; Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra; and the Mariinsky Theatre orchestra

Jurek Holze

Fredrik Malmberg is also in demand as a pianist and organist, working together with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra and conductors such as Daniel Harding and Claudio Abbado.

In 2012, Fredrik Malmberg was appointed principal conductor of Eric Ericson's Chamber Choir and professor of Choral Conducting at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm.

Alva Press. violin II

Alva Press is a violinist from Trondheim, Norway who moved to Stockholm in 2012 to attend the Royal College of Music, where she studied under Sergej Bolkhovets and Cecilia Zilliacus. By 2018, Alva had completed her studies, but she stayed on in Stockholm. As a freelance musician, she works for several orchestras throughout Sweden. Chamber music is close to her heart, and she's happy to play in all kinds of contexts and constellations.



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Johanna Sjunnesson, cello

Johanna Sjunnesson has been a cellist in the Swedish Radio Symphony orchestra since 1999. Following studies at Ingesund Folkhögskola, she went on to the Royal College of music in Stockholm, rounding it off with a soloist diploma concert with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra. She has been awarded several grants and scholarships that made it possible for her to pursue studies abroad.

As a soloist, she has performed at the Polar Prize Banquet, the Swedish Grammy Gala, and with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, to mention a few, along with events at the Concert Hall, the Nobel Museum, and the famous Blue Hall at Stockholm's City Hall.



Eric Persso

In addition to all this, Johanna is a composer in the post-classical style. A piece commissioned by the 2019 Nordic Council Awards was premiered at the Stockholm Concert Hall. It was played on international television and radio broadcasts on Nobel Day, used in a film created for *Fotografiska*, a museum dedicated to photography, and has been performed live at many concert venues such as the genre-bending symphonic festival Gränslandet ("Borderlands"). Johanna has also composed music for a Swedish Radio documentary production, and for her album *Celistial*.

Martin Sturfält, piano

Swedish pianist Martin Sturfält enjoys an international career as a concerto soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, and recording artist. His huge repertoire ranges from Baroque through to the present day, earning special recognition for his interpretations of Swedish music. His recordings of music by Wilhelm Stenhammar and Adolf Wiklund on the Hyperion label have garnered international critical acclaim.

Martin began giving concerts at the age of 11 and has since then performed extensively all over Europe and Asia at major venues throughout Sweden as well as at London's Purcell Room, the Barbican Hall, the Royal Festival Hall, the Wigmore Hall, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels.



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As a concerto soloist, Martin has appeared with, to name a few, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra; the NHK Orchestra in Tokyo; the Hallé Orchestra; and all major Swedish orchestras including the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic and the Swedish Radio Symphony; collaborating with conductors such as Herbert Blomstedt, Thomas Dausgaard, Sir Mark Elder, Andrew Manze, Vassily Sinaisky and Alexander Vedernikov.

Stockholm Wind Quartet (SWQ)

The Stockholm Wind Quartet (SWQ) consists of established musicians from the Stockholm music scene. In 2016, their shared interest for exploring unique timbres by combining instruments to achieve a rich tonal language deepened their collaboration. The SWQ has performed all over Sweden and the members are constantly looking for new repertoire, new sources of inspiration, and opportunities to develop the ensemble. Three of the members of the ensemble also belong to Blåsarsymfonikerna (The Swedish Wind Ensemble):



- Peter Gullavist, bassoon
- Madeleine Johansson, flute, piccolo
- Johanna Orrje, oboe
- Johan Söderlund, clarinet

Vokalharmonin

Vokalharmonin was founded in 2004 as an ensemble specializing in the interpretation of early and contemporary vocal music. Fredrik Malmberg has been the Artistic Director from the start.

The ensemble's chief interest lies in exploring new sounds and vocal techniques, which has led to a close collaboration with several of Sweden's leading composers. Other musical partners, in Sweden and abroad, include specialist ensembles and orchestras, independent theatres, electronic studios and music festivals.



In 2004, Vokalharmonin was appointed Artist in Residence at Swedish Radio, and in 2007, the ensemble was selected Choir of the Year by Rikskonserter (Concerts Sweden).

The ensemble's recordings have been critically acclaimed, and the albums *Charpentier - Sacred Works and Soavi Accenti* were both nominated for a Swedish Grammy. Members are:

- Sofia Niklasson
- Lovisa Sydén
- Sara Niklasson
- Elias Aaron Johansson

- Love Tronner
- Love Lyckelin Bergman
- Arvid Eriksson
- Didier Linder

Jerker Eklund, sound engineer

Jerker Eklund is a sound engineer, producer, and musician. Graduate of the individual programme at the Royal College of Music. As a musician, he's worked with artists such as Jill Johnson, Nils Landgren, Blacknuss Allstars, Simone Moreno, and Lena Philipsson. Recording music is something he's always done – his father, Christer Eklund, gave him his first Tandberg tape recorder when he was 7 years old! A sound engineer since 1996. Had his own studio since 2012. And he's currently sharing a studio with the legendary Alar Suurna at the Shortlist Studios complex.



Elliot Ellio

ALL WORKS COMPOSED BY Maria Lithell Flyg

PRODUCED BY Maria Lithell Flyg
RECORDING AND CO-PRODUCER ON ALL TRACKS Jerker Eklund
MIXED AND MASTERED BY Jerker Eklund

Track 1 recorded at Gustaf Adolfskyrkan
Tracks 2, 3, 4, 5 recorded at Studio 2, Swedish Radio
Track 6 recorded at Musikaliska

TEXT EDITOR Maria Lithell Flyg TRANSLATION Ingrid Eng PHOTO COVER Niclas Ahlberg PHOTO BOOKLET Nadja Sjöström

Little by Lithell Music Production

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I would like to thank Blåsarsymfonikerna (The Swedish Wind Ensemble) and bring attention to the impressive work they've done to keep this music alive and ensure the "regrowth" of new musicians.

