

Staffan Storm

CHORAL
WORKS

1. <i>Nachtregen – for chorus and viola</i> (2018)	9:47
<i>Soloist Kim Hellgren, viola</i>	
ASPECTS OF SNOW (2012)	
2. <i>At Tago Bay</i>	2:09
3. <i>In the early light</i>	2:13
4. <i>I look out and snow is falling</i>	3:17
SEELENHERBST* – <i>for chorus and percussion</i> (2022)	
<i>Soloist Daniel Saur, percussion</i>	
5. <i>Frühlingsgruß</i>	5:48
6. <i>Die Mondesbrücke</i>	4:29
7. <i>Stille Frage</i>	3:45
8. <i>Am Rheine</i>	6:23
9. <i>Herbstlied</i>	7:46
LÅNGT I FÖRSVUNNA TIDER* (2021)	
10. <i>Stjärnöga</i>	2:53
11. <i>Flickan knyter i Johannenatten</i>	2:35
12. <i>Vore jag ett litet barn</i>	3:04

Total playing time: 54:17

*World Premiere Recording

Staffan Storm: Choral Works

THE THREE SHORT movements in “Aspects of Snow” are united by the theme of snowy landscapes depicted in the poems and also share concentrated musical material. The piece was written in 2012 and premiered the same year by the Malmö Academy of Music Chamber Choir under the direction of Mats Paulsson.

Else Lasker-Schüler (1869–1945) was one of the leading German writers in the decades after the turn of the century. She became famous for her expressionist poetry and her colorful performances. After the Nazis took power, she was persecuted and abused but managed to escape via Switzerland to Jerusalem, where she settled for the rest of her life. The short poem “Die Dämmerung holt die Sichel” can here surround the prose sketch “Nachtregen” (“The Night Rain”). The work is written for choir a cappella and solo viola, which functions as a wordless voice in the vocal folds. The work

was composed in 2018 and is dedicated to Erik Westberg and his vocal ensemble.

The suite “Seelenherbst” (“Autumn of the Soul”) for mixed choir and percussion was composed in 2021–22 and is based on a selection of poems by Luise Büchner (1821–1877). During her time, Büchner was a noted author of novels, short stories, and poetry. However, she probably became best known for her debate book “Die Frauen und ihr Beruf”, which was printed in several editions during her lifetime. She also worked to ensure that the works of her late older brother Georg Büchner, including “Wozzeck”, would be published. Luise Büchner’s poetry has a personal romantic-symbolist touch where nature, special places, and environments reflect and relate to people’s inner experiences and changing moods. Sometimes the picture expands with questions about the individual’s place in the universe. The chosen poems form a suite of

five movements, where the two outer movements that frame the work depict a journey from winter to autumn, while the three middle movements are evening and night moods of different characters. This work is also written for and dedicated to Erik Westberg and his vocal ensemble.

“Långt i försvunna tider” (“Far in Bygone Times”) takes its starting point from three songs by Wilhelm Stenhammar, “Stjärnöga”, “Flickan knyter i Johannesnatten” and “Vore jag ett litet barn”. I selected these songs because they were more open to new musical angles due to their close connection to the Swedish folk song. Stenhammar

is here himself both freer in his use of harmony and in his part-writing, something I have underlined and partly reinforced. I have also placed the songs in surrounding wordless material as contrast and musical reflection, and here and there gaps also open up inside the songs when new material is used as contrast. Swedish Radio commissioned the work for the 150th anniversary of Wilhelm Stenhammar in 2021 and the Swedish Radio Choir premiered it under the direction of Erik Westberg.

Staffan Storm

1. *Nachtregen*

„Die Dämmerung holt die Sichel aus der Dunkelheit
Und steckt sie mir ans Wolkenkleid
Ich bin die Nacht“

Wenn ich morgen die Augen öffne, werden sie eine ganz andere Welt sehen. Ich liege zwischen meinen blauen Gedanken, die entspringen in der Furche meiner Stirn. Es vertönt bange eine Glocke in mir, es ist die Glocke der Erde und ich bin zu müde, um zu läuten und doch hängt sie im Turm meiner Seele. Ich möchte niederknien, aber meine Kniee bluten [und] sie würden einen grausamen Schatten über die Welt werfen. Aber wenn ich morgen die Augen öffne, ist der alte Himmel tot und die verrunzelte Erde fressen die Geizigen und Lichte fallen in meinen Schoss und erlöst werde ich sein aus Tausendschwere. Ich fühle schon den Keimschmerz meiner Flügel – auf! Eine Möwe bin ich, schwingen werde ich mich. Wie die Lüfte rauschen... Ich glaube an Dich, Du kommender Himmel. Schon flattert mein Atem, wie wildes Lenzwehn hin und her.

„Ich bin die Nacht
Verletz dich nicht an mir, gieb acht
Noch hat der Hirt die goldenen Lämmer nicht gebracht“

Text: Else Lasker-Schüler
(from *Gedichte und Prosa aus dem Nachlass*)

2-4. Aspects of Snow – Three Japanese Poems

I.

At Tago Bay

I came out, and looked afar –
to see the hemp-white
of Mount Fuji's lofty peak
under a flurry of snow.

Text: Yamabe no Akahito (early 8th century)

II.

In the early light
one could almost mistake it
for moonrays at dawn –
white snow falling down
at Yoshino Village.

Text: Sakanoue no Korenori (early 10th century)

III.

I look out, and snow is falling,
with the moon still in the sky.

A new day begins.
And of my dream of yesterday
not a trace remains.

Text: Takayama Sozei (– 1455)

5–9. Seelenherbst

I. Frühlingsgruß

Nur düstre Wolken seh' ich geh'n und kommen,
Und ewig droht der Winter fortzuwähren –
Die Seele war so trüb mir und beklommen,
Ich rief den Frühling, ach! er will nicht kommen
Sie und des Himmels Sterne aufzuklären.

Und durch des Gartens Gänge dichtverschlungen
Ging ich – doch sieh, was hat sich dort begeben!
Schneeglöcklein sind der kalten Erd' entsprungen,
Sie haben siegend sich hervorgerungen,
Erweckt von eines Sonnenkusses Leben.

Nun stillt ihr, Frühlingsboten, mein Verlangen!
Ihr woll't in's Herz mir neues Leben senken!
Wie gläubig euer Kelch ist aufgegangen,
Weil er der Sonne einz'gen Kuß empfangen,
So soll mir Frühling euer Anblick schenken!

II. Die Mondesbrücke

Schweigend ruht des Rheines Spiegel,
Golden schwebt der Mond darüber,
Senket aus den blauen Höhen
Eine Strahlenbrücke nieder.

Und sie taucht die lichten Pfeiler
In die tiefe, dunkle Welle,

Daß vor Wonne leise bebet
Glanzumwoben ihre Schwelle.
Dampfumhüllet, schwarz und nächtig,
Kommt das Schiff einhergeflogen,
Schneidet brausend mitten innen
Durch der Brücke goldnen Bogen.
Die so stille und so prächtig
Festgezimmert hat gestanden,
Ist zertrümmert, ist zerborsten
In unzählige Demanten.
Zuckend fliegen sie wie Blitze
Über die bewegten Fluthen,
Wo der heit're Bau sich wölbte,
Wogt ein wildes Meer von Gluthen.

III. Stille Frage

Es quillt des Abendsterns
Geheimnißvoller Schein,
So nah' und auch so fern,
Mir in das Herz hinein.
Drin glüht ein and'res Licht,
So nah' und auch so fern,
Das Herz umschließt es dicht –
Doch weit ist's wie der Stern.

Du gold'ner Liebesstrahl,
Geh', frage deinen Stern,
Bleibt er zu deiner Qual,
Dir ewig, ewig fern?

IV. Am Rheine

Abend sinkt mit seinem Frieden
Auf die Berge, in das Thal –
Holdes Bild! das mir beschieden
Ist, im letzten Tagesstrahl!

An den blauen, duft'gen Höhen
Dehnt sich glühend dort im West –
Eines Grußes letztes Wehen –
Noch des Abendgoldes Rest.
Und des Stromes glatte Bahnen
Kaum die Welle mehr bewegt,
Läßt die ew'ge Macht nur ahnen,
Die ihn rastlos weiter trägt!

An des Himmels fernsten Räumen
Selbst die Wolke zögert still,
Harrend, ob mit goldnen Säumen
Sie das Mondlicht kränzen will.
Friede! süßes Glück von Oben!
Welch' ein Zauber dich umflieht!

Hemmst des Stromes wildes Toben,
Bannst in Ruhe Luft und Licht.

V. Herbstlied

Es liegt der Herbst auf allen Wegen,
In hundert Farben prangt sein Kleid,
Wie seine Trauer, seinen Segen
Er um sich streut zu gleicher Zeit.

Es rauscht der Fuß im welken Laube,
Was blüht⁴ und grünte, ward ein Traum –
Allein am Stocke winkt die Traube
Und goldne Frucht schmückt rings den Baum.

So nimmt und gibt mit vollen Händen
Der Herbst, ein Dieb und eine Fee;
Erfüllung kann allein er spenden,
Doch sie umfängt ein tiefes Weh! –
O, Herbst der Seele! deine Früchte,
Sind auch Gewinn sie, oder Raub?
Der Wünsche Blüte ist zunichte,
Der Hoffnung Grün ein welkes Laub.

Zu schwer erkauf, um zu beglücken,
O, Seelenherbst, ist deine Zier!
Der Saft der Traube kann entzücken,
Doch keine Wonne strömt aus dir.

10–12. *Långt i försvunna tider*

Stjärnöga

Stjärnöga, du som jag mött
långt i försvunna tider,
nu är det kvälldags, och trött
min ungdom till vila skrider.

Irrbloss, som världen har tänt,
slockna så lätt i världen.
Stjärnöga, mycket har hänt,
sedan vi skildes på färden.

Villsam är vägen som går
fram genom mörka länder.
Stjärnöga, stjärnöga, när
jag aldrig mer dina händer?

Tag mina händer
och led mig in i ditt ljusa rike.
Stjärnöga, giv mig din fred
och låt mig varda din like.

Text: Bo Bergman (1869–1967)

Flickan knyter i Johannenatten

Flickan knyter i Johannenatten
kring den gröna broddens späda stänglar,
silkestrådar utaf skilda färger;
men, på morgonstunden, går hon sedan

dit, att leta ut sin framtids öden.
Nu, så hör hur flickan där betar sig:
har den svarta, sorgens stängel, vuxit,
talar hon och sörjer med de andra.
har den röda, glädjens stängel, vuxit,
talar hon och fröjdas med de andra.
har den gröna, kärleksstängeln, vuxit,
tiger hon och fröjdas i sitt hjärta.

Text: Johan Ludvig Runeberg (1804–1877)

Vore jag ett litet barn

Vore jag ett litet barn,
då skulle jag gå ut och leka,
bygga mig en liten kvarn
och ro min lilla eka.
Mången vän, som här jag vann,
under vita lakan blundar,
och nu är jag en gammal man,
som sitter vid brasan och grundar.
Gåta, saga, jordedag,
ditt djup kan ingen loda.
Ännu samma barn är jag
och människorna goda.

Text: Verner von Heidenstam (1859–1940)

Staffan Storm, composer

Staffan Storm is a composer and professor in composition at the Academy of Music in Malmö. Since 2020, he has been a member of the Royal Academy of Music. Storm has a rich and varied list of works behind him, which includes everything from solo and chamber music to orchestral works and opera. In recent years, vocal music has assumed a central role in his production. Storm has a close and dynamic collaboration with the musicians who perform his compositions and has composed music for several of Sweden's leading musicians. In 2016, the large-scale work "Three Autumns" for trumpet and piano was written for Håkan Hardenberger, who premiered it in Wigmore Hall, and the collaboration with alto Anna Larsson has resulted in both the song cycle "Hinter des Tages Ende" and the opera "Im Treibhaus". Staffan Storm's music has been awarded several prizes. In 2016, the large-scale organ work "...et lux in tenebris lucet..."

was awarded the Saltö-Järnåker Foundation's prize and in 2019, the string quartet "Nachtseel" received the Swedish Music Publishers' award. The symphony "The Persistence of Memory" was awarded the grand Christ Johnson Prize in 2021.



Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble

The Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble was formed in 1993 and consists of 16–20 singers. The members of the ensemble work as soloists, church musicians, and music teachers, and they come from northern Sweden and Finland. The Ensemble has commissioned and premiered over 60 pieces written for them.

1996 the Ensemble's first CD *Musica Sacra* was released on the Opus3 label. The Ensemble's first collaboration with Studio Acusticum Records in 2010 resulted in the

triple album *Pater Caelestis – Terra Mater – Vox Humana*. Since then, the Ensemble has recorded around 20 CDs and phonograms issued by Opus3, Studio Acusticum Records and Naxos. *Vita Nuova*, featuring Swedish choral music, was rated "world-class" by the music magazine OPUS. In 2020, the Ensemble debuted on the LP medium with a live recording of Bach's monumental B-minor Mass and the same year the Ensemble was the first choir ever to be awarded The Swedish Society of Composers's Interpreter prize.



Erik Westberg, conductor

(b. 1956) studied choral conducting with Eric Ericson at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm 1976–1987. He has been the director of numerous choirs, including the YMCA Choir in Stockholm, the Oslo Philharmonic Choir, the Swedish Youth Choir,



and guest conductor of the Swedish Radio Choir.

In 2006 Erik Westberg was presented with His Majesty the King's Medal of the Eighth Size with the ribbon of the Order of the Seraphim "for significant achievements in Swedish Musical Life". In 2016 he was awarded the Grant of Honour and Merit of Norrbotten County. He has been a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music since 2008 and a Professor of Choral Conducting and Choral Singing at the School of Music at Luleå University of Technology since 2003.

Daniel Saur

Since 2008, Daniel Saur has been a percussionist in ensemble neo, an ensemble that belongs to the absolute top tier in contemporary chamber music, both nationally and internationally. Alongside ensemble neo, Daniel Saur works as a freelance percussionist.



Kim Hellgren

Kim Hellgren is born in Gothenburg, though currently residing in Stockholm, where she got her degrees at the Royal College of Music/Edsberg Music Institute.

Between 2010 and 2020, Kim was the violist in the contemporary ensemble ensemble neo, which recorded and premiered a substantial amount of new music at festivals

worldwide. She has collaborated with composers such as Kaija Saariaho, Salvatore Sciarrino, Bent Sørensen, and Steve Reich during larger portrait concerts of their music.



Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble

SOPRANO

Christina Fridolfsson (1-4, 10-12)
Linnea Pettersson (1-9)
Virve Karén (1-4)
Tone Antonsson (1-4)
Terese Antonsson (5-12)
Kristina Sturk (5-9)
Elin Bellani (10-12)
Josefine Gellwar Madsen (10-12)

ALTO

Cecilia Grönfelt (1-12)
Anna Risberg (1-12)
Anna-Karin Lindström (1-12)
Katarina Karlsson (1-12)
Katharina Johansson (5-12)
Elias Aaron Johansson (5-9)
Anu Arvola (2-4)
Indra Lindkvist (2-4)
Linnéa Martinius (2-4)
Katarina Falk (10-12)
Siri Arvidson (1)

TENOR

Stefan Millgård (1-12)
Erik Jonsson (1-12)

Adrian Rubin (5-12)
Bartłomiej Szulc (5-9)
Erik Stillesjö (1-4)
Kristoffer Arvidsson (1-4)
Georgy Terekhov (2-4)
Robert Lindberg (10-12)
Karl Holdar (10-12)
Fredrik Grahn (1)

BASS

Martin Eriksson (1-4, 10-12)
Janne Posti (1-4, 10-12)
Isak Lundberg (5-9)
David Risberg (5-9)
Johan Nordlander (5-9)
Johan Tegman (5-9)
Simon Bergvide (5-9)
Anders Edström (10-12)
Johan Tegman (10-12)
Rickard Collin (10-12)
Daniel Åberg (2-4)
Olle Sköld (2-4)
Linus Nordmark (2-4)
Andreas E. Olsson (1)
Johannes Liedbergius (1)

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