

While The Night Falls

HÄRENSTAM & WEURLANDER

CONTEMPORARY CHAMBER MUSIC

FOR GUITAR & ACCORDION



A word from the Producer

We live in a time where music genres increasingly meet and cross-fertilize in an organic way, where musicians from different styles often collaborate and create new music.

Long after Philip Glass transformed David Bowie's music into symphonic works and the classical guitarist Jason Vieux interpreted the jazz guitarist Pat Metheny, one can perhaps legitimately ask the question; What is chamber music today, 2024?

With the album *While the Night Falls*, we want to expand the concept of chamber music by bringing in contemporary melodies, styles and genres - with the hope of broadening the notated tradition.

We meet the power of composers like Wolfgang Bartsch, the folk music influences of pieces from Vicente Bögeholz and Minna herself. We get to meet jazz giants Pat Metheny and Thelonius Monk in new notated arrangements.

Known for redefining contemporary classical music through his minimalist style, Philip Glass is one of the most influential composers of our time. We are very pleased to have received green light from Glass's publisher for this album to release two brand new arrangements of his music, both created by the duo themselves.

Virtuosity is, of course, a concept that was constantly present when I worked with Minna and David, but beyond the playing technical aspect: the virtuosity of their joint phrasing, responsiveness and their incredible timing together - and having a relaxed dynamic communication even in breathtaking tempi adds another dimension in their chamber music making.

Work on this album has been going on and off for over a year. We have weighed all the recordings/ takes made against each other. Never have my eyes read so many notes in real time to see and hear and discuss which version serves the composition best. The take that was "perfect" was sometimes opposed to the more "musical", the one that stood for the rawness was opposed to the more balanced, etc.

Now, after a considerable amount of finished profanity and a couple of "meltdowns" in the studio (only to bring the best to you listeners), we are finally ready to welcome you to enjoy our album - join us on the journey from high-energy music that slowly moves towards the calm and the shadows of the night, the time when the noise subsides and rest can finally set in...

Levin Studios, Stockholm November 2024
Stefan Levin, Recording, Mix & Mastering



Minna Weurlander

The charismatic accordion virtuoso was born and raised in Finland, and her passion for music led her to Sweden, where she now works as a concert musician and composer. She is widely regarded as one of Europe's most versatile accordionists. She collaborates with symphony orchestras, string quartets, contemporary and experimental dance, theater, performance, and film productions. She also has extensive experience leading various ensembles and music productions.

David Härenstam

After completing his advanced musical studies and earning an Advanced Diploma under Professor John Mills at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, David has contributed to numerous recordings, including collaborations with cellist Andreas Brantelid, violinist Nils-Erik Sparf and jazz pianist Peter Knudsen. He has toured extensively across Europe, China, and Australia, both as a soloist and as part of various ensembles. Additionally, David serves as the Artistic Director of two chamber music festivals in Sweden.

About the The Music on this Album

While the Night falls is an album that in every way uses an extended concept of the word chamber music. It is also an album that begins in today's upbeat tempo with wild rhythms and high energy but which slowly lets the calm and the night fall in – with every note and every piece.

01. **Spiel der Kräfte** – Wolfgang Bartsch (b. 1962)

The album begins with the explosive "Spiel der Kräfte" (Battle of the forces), a piece whose name explains itself in its divergent, almost schizophrenic expression: from the wild, aggressive (so wild, in fact, that David had to replace his custom-built Jim Redgate-guitar against a less delicate one, out of concern that it would be damaged during the recording) to the softer intermezzo with jazzy notes of Minna and soft legato playing in the guitar.

In this piece, Bartsch has not only written an insanely virtuosic tour de force, he has also created the very image of the new chamber music. Is it jazz, classical or something else? The guitarist is asked to play with a plectrum like an electric guitarist, essentially different from what we usually associate with classical guitar. The accordion part, like the guitar, is strictly notated but sometimes sounds both improvisationally free as well as violent with riffs that perhaps even bring to mind contemporary progressive metal or Djent?

02. **Puyuyui** – Vicente Bögeholz (b. 1963)

With the next piece we move towards folk music and leave room for free improvisation. Vicente, himself a distinguished guitarist, knows very well how to test the limits of how a guitar can be treated. The accordion part, although written by Vicente himself, was produced in collaboration with the bandoneon virtuoso Juanjo Mosalini. The piece's quirky, perhaps hilarious, name derives from the 'taunting' the two musicians received during a tour of Chile when their failed attempts to describe the city they were playing in resulted in gleeful laughter from the locals who thought it sounded like they were saying just... Puyuyui!

03. **Nightfall & Noric** – Minna Weurlander (b. 1973)

Minna's piece has two distinct parts. In the first part, the evening fades into an improvisational conversation of tone cascades between guitar and accordion. Then follows Noric, which is Romanian for 'Cheers' (literally 'for health') like a wild intoxicating dance as the night draws in.

04. **Astorita** – Roger Eon/Kristina Kuusisto

No accordion album would be complete without a nod and tribute to Astor Piazzolla. First via Roger Eon & Kristina Kuusisto clearly Piazzolla-sounding 'Astorita' and then follow up with two pieces by the king of tango nuevo himself.

05. **Gulinay** – Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)

A musical microcosm that initially takes us through a dark inner landscape to invoke brighter memories in the middle section before entering the closing section into nostalgia and perhaps to a memory whose sharp edges have now been ground down.

06. **Psicosis** – Astor Piazzolla Arr.: Ian Murphy/Minna Weurlander

The guitar part is arranged by Ian Murphy while the accordion part is arranged by Minna herself.



07. **Mad Rush** – Philip Glass (b. 1937) (arr.: David Härenstam)

Mad Rush was originally composed as an organ piece, and is based on alternations between two themes. One theme is peaceful and meditative, but the other is fast and a bit frantic. Glass himself explained that one theme is one peaceful and meditative, the other one represents the play of the wrathful and peaceful deities in Tibetan Buddhism.

In 1979, the organizers of the Dalai Lama's very first public address in North America had approached Glass to create a piece of music with one very particular prerequisite: because the Dalai Lama's schedule – and thereby his arrival at the venue – was so vague, they needed a piece of music that could be stretched for an indefinite period of time without the audience realize there was any delay occurring...

08. Etude no 16 – Philip Glass (arr.: David Härenstam)

Glass wrote two books of Piano Etudes 1-10 and 11-20. He wrote the etudes mainly to improve his own solo piano playing in order to expand his repertoire for his solo concerts. But of course they didn't stay just in Glass own repertoire but now being played worldwide - in different instrumentations.

The 20 piano Etudes, when listen to them straight through, form a great portrait of the most influential composers of our time. The stillness and mystery of the night often seem to be reflected in his music, where the calm gives way to the free movement of thought. Glass's musical language is simple but powerful and it has left an indelible mark on the world of music.

09-11 The Slumbering Green – Stefan Klaveral (b. 1975)

9. I. Uninvaded sleep
10. II. Into the Sickly Light
11. III. Finest sunlight flee

Three propositions and three aspects of approaching sleep. In the third and last movement, the music literally depicts how the musicians, the composer, or you (?) fall asleep. The day is over. Night has fallen. Something new tomorrow.

12. 'Round Midnight – Thelonious Monk (1917-1982) (arr.: David Härenstam)

For David, who began his career with electric guitar and jazz education, the pianist Thelonious Monk has always been close to him – the moody often jocular mixed with the beautiful! The ingenious melodies and timbres. Round Midnight – the party is now over, the buzz has died down, the clock has struck twelve.

13. Last Train Home – Pat Metheny (b. 1954) (arr.: David Härenstam)

"The party winds down, the dancing is over, the silence begins to take over. A train strives alone into the night in guitarist Pat Metheny's Last train home. With its pulsating eighth notes, we might see a steam locomotive rather than an express train, and with its simple harmonics, this is perhaps as much a pop song as a jazz song? Contrary to what one might think, there is no room for improvisation here, every note is written down phrase highlighted. A song that has followed guitarist David Härenstam for many years, but always with the suspicion that the guitar might not, Pat notwithstanding, be the best instrument for these long lines and big sounds? Is it possible that there is another instrument, even better suited to embrace this wonderful musical tapestry of long winding melodies?"



David Härenstam plays a Jim Redgate Wave Double Top guitar and an Ortega RCE180-LTD

Minna Weurlander plays a Scandalli Extreme accordion

The Album was recorded, produced, mixed and mastered by Stefan Levin in Levin Studios, Stockholm.® & © 2024 Levin Studios

A special thanks goes to the Swedish Arts Council for making this album possible.

While the Night Falls

1. SPIEL DER KRÄFTE - Wolfgang Bartsch 3:00
 2. PUYUYUI -Vicente Bögeholz 3:42
 3. NIGHTFALL & NORIC - Minna Weurlander 4:45
 4. ASTORITA - Kristina Kuusisto/Roger Eon 3:00
 5. GULINAY - Astor Piazzolla 3:21
 6. PSICOSIS - Astor Piazzolla 2:00
 7. MAD RUSH - Philip Glass/arr. David Härenstam 5:52
 8. ETUDE no.16 - Philip Glass/arr. David Härenstam 4:09
 - THE SLUMBERING GREEN - Stefan Klaverdal
 9. I. Uninvaded sleep 2:50
 10. II. Into the Sickly Light 2:51
 11. III. Faintest sunlights flee 2:21
 12. 'ROUND MIDNIGHT - Thelonious Monk/arr. David Härenstam 5:25
 13. LAST TRAIN HOME - Pat Metheny/arr. David Härenstam 4:49
- Total time: 48:00