



ART
&
LOVE

VOL. 2

**by Simo Sakari
Aaltonen**

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*This is an extended sample of the full book
published in April 2026.*

Art & Love, Vol. 2 by Simo Sakari Aaltonen. The
moral right of the author has been asserted.

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*Dedicated to everyone
who has been there for me*

Nothing is better than simplicity...

—Walt Whitman, 1855,
Preface to *Leaves of Grass*

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Before the Gazebo

The eternal lapping waves of this star-torn vast,
which ebb only to return again when silence
remains the only reality.

To become a stranger to yourself, ever setting
for new shores, yet admittedly with moments of
growing more one with all the shores and the
vast itself.

How do I cut this cord?

I tarry and must go — embark in this extremity
on that which always awaited but which I
dreaded to explore for the dark jewels that
glitter in those boughs on the other shore.

They come in pairs and flit between the trunks
awaiting the moment we move as one.

It is not to go away forever, no, but it is to go.
This present tableau, this diorama is a carousel,
and we spin and spin all in place.

So if silence answers, answer silence until it
becomes too much, then break out and ride
headlong down the teeming twilight carnival on
your carousel horse to the shore.

I await near the tea cups — no, make it the
white gazebo of childhood dreaming.

(10 November 2014)

Sincerity

Sincerity is priceless and essential to me in this world, in both art and the rest of life.

I avoid insincerity wherever I come across it. It can ruin anything. Whereas sincerity makes everything good possible.

In the realm of art, nothing can truly compel, enchant, convince, or involve me if sincerity is lacking.

With it, the play of imagination has no limits. Real freedom is possible only where sincerity is respected and cultivated.

Thoreau Quote

Poetry cannot breathe in the scholar's
atmosphere.

(30 November 1841)

This may be the shortest possible summation of
why, many years ago, I left the world of
academia behind without finishing my Master's
Degree.

Places of Learning

Ray Bradbury said his university was the library. He taught himself from the books there.

Robert Bloch, who wrote the book on which Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960) was based, said that his friend and mentor Lovecraft was his university.

Learning can take place anywhere and from anything at all, certainly not only from things and people professionally dedicated to that.

I hope this will become more widely understood in time.

So many people who could learn in all kinds of ways are prevented from doing that simply because they believe they need a school or teacher for it.

6th Grade Memory

Sixth grade, school trip from my little home town Kangasniemi to the city of Tampere. Journey there on the bus. *Twin Peaks* music constantly on the radio.

Evening draws in. Wooden cabins with three or four kids per. *Garfield* comics as reading material.

Spin the bottle — “Truth or dare?” Sweets and soft drinks.

Somewhere nearby outside, a physical fight breaks out. Someone runs right past our cabin, yelling. Adults — drunk teachers from elsewhere or just random drunk adults? Who knows?

A quick conference among our mixed cabin crew of 12-year-olds, whether to stay in the cabin — either there was no lock on the door or it wasn't much of one — or make a run for it.

We did the latter, finding our teachers' cabins. Maybe the police came to deal with it. Spring of 1991.

Before or after that night, a day at the amusement park I live near at the time of this writing and often go past on my way to and back from the lake.

But I recall no other music that played in all that time, only *Twin Peaks*.

Bobby Fischer

He was the first chess player I got to know by name.

This was because in my teens I often checked out from the library¹ an interesting chess book carrying his name: *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess* (1966).² It consisted of chess problems, presented as diagrams, for the reader to solve.

I'm not a great chess player. When I was in my teens, my father decided to learn to play chess,

1. I even have a video that verifies this. I recorded a kind of video diary entry back then mentioning and showing this book.

2. Co-authored by Stuart Margulies, Don Mosenfelder, and Bobby Fischer.

and after a while he could always beat me.

I've wondered why I never got better at it than I did. I'm good at concentrating — one school teacher told my parents I had “a phenomenal ability to focus” (this might even be something called “hyperfocus”) — and solving problems in general, but chess, no.

It may be because my way of proceeding in life doesn't build on either expected betrayals or planned deceptions or manipulation of my own.

To be good at chess, you absolutely have to be able to deceive.

* * *

Bobby Fischer is buried in Iceland. He lived there for the last years of his life. Without realising it, in 2016 I passed very close to his

grave on my first visit to Iceland.

He was a character, but for me also an exception in that I've never been even a bit interested in any other chess player.

* * *

There's a 1993 film called *Searching for Bobby Fischer* (UK title: *Innocent Moves*) directed by Steven Zaillian, with music by James Horner, and featuring actors like Ben Kingsley and Laurence Fishburne.

* * *

Something synchronous happened when I was on a lunch break after having just written the above.

While I was in the middle of completing a brief translating task related to that film, a task that would take no more than a few hours, I continued watching a James Horner interview

video — and just at that part of the video he mentioned this relatively little-known film he had scored.

Prior to this, I had no conscious memory of him having composed that soundtrack nor of him mentioning the film in this video. But I definitely had watched the video before in the past, at least once while falling asleep.

Had it registered in my subconscious then as I slept and now prompted me — out of all the activities I could've undertaken at that moment — to again seek out and watch it?

Had that part of my mind maybe even made me pause the video before that moment so that I could come across it while completing this related translation project I had known was coming up?

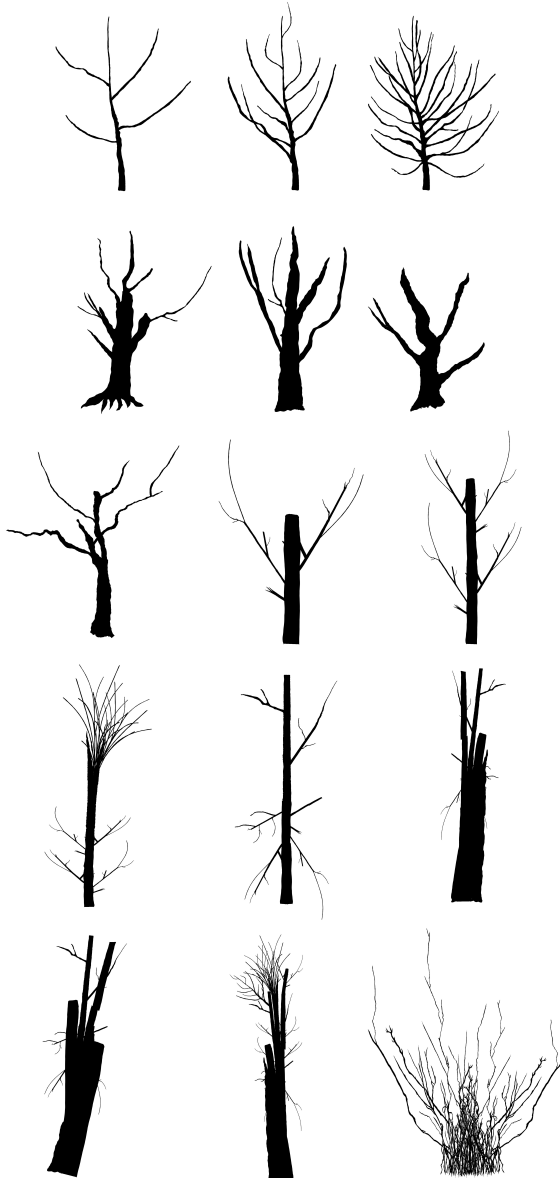
Could my subconscious be that much of a chess player?

Creepy Trees

Graham Ingels drew them so well for EC Comics in the 1950s. He may have been the first great drawer of lovely creepy trees in comics.

Below are some of mine so far. All the branches are made up of individual silhouettes of branches I traced from photos I took of trees in Iceland. For these drawings, I combined these Icelandic branch segments to make up many longer, new branches.

This realisation was one of the big thrills I had when actively drawing for many months in a row around 2019: that I could make my own tree-building kit — these individual branch drawings from which an infinite amount of new trees could be built.



Here are the drawings of the branches from which all those trees were created and some more elements for future use:



**ABOUT
THE AUTHOR
(2026)**

**SIMO SAKARI
AALTONEN**
—WRITER & COMPOSER—



simosakariaaltonen.com

Finnish writer, composer, filmmaker, visual artist, podcaster. Has lived in Finland, Iceland, Paris, and the UK.

BOOKS

Art & Love (*series, 2020–*)

At Dawn: Early Short Stories (*2022, Large Print Edition 2024*)

The Better Patreon (*series, 2026–*)

An Iceland Symphony, Op. 1: A Theatrical Symphony for All Ages (*sheet music, 2021, 2nd Edition 2024*)

Land of Youth & Beauty: Early Poems (*2022, Large Print Edition 2024*)

Tales from the North, Book I (*sheet music, 2024*)

What Now with Simo (*series, 2020–*)

You Never Know What You'll See in the Haunted Garden (*limited series, 2019–*)

MUSIC

Early Music Archive (*2023 album*)

“In the Fog, Deep” (*2024 single*)

“Land of Youth & Beauty” (*2023 single*)

Passages Dark and Light (*2022 album*)

Passages Dark and Light II (*2024 album*)

Tales from the North, Book I (*2023 album*)

“That Dark, Dark Night” (*2024 single*)

The 13th Tale (*2024 album*)

Official site: simosakariaaltonen.com

Patreon: patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon

Bandcamp: simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com

Podcast hosting site: rss.com/podcasts/simo

YouTube: www.youtube.com/@SimoSakariAaltonen



The Better Patreon is my private Patreon and creative online home launched on 3 April 2025.

It provides to all members a regular stream of features on a weekly 3-day cycle (Monday to Wednesday):

A weekly, fully laid out and illustrated PDF newsletter, a Creative Journal, a David Lynch Series (a book in the making), short stories, poetry, diverse short writings, full Northern Exposure rewatch posts, Monday Midnight Movies, special features about all aspects of creativity, glimpses behind the scenes, early access to all my future works before they're published or released elsewhere, and a lot more to come.

patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon





The Better Patreon is both a website and a book series, with the former launched in April 2025 and the latter in March 2026. These books will collect between two covers all the written and visual content month by month, making this a true and unique

THE BETTER PATREON VOL. 1: APRIL 2025

- ✓ 4 INTRODUCTORY POSTS
- ✓ 4 NEWSLETTER ISSUES
- ✓ 5 SHORT STORIES
- ✓ 12 POEMS
- ✓ 12 ART & LOVE CHAPTERS
- ✓ MONDAY MIDNIGHT MOVIE #1
- ✓ 4 NORTHERN EXPOSURE ENTRIES
- ✓ HEALTH & CREATIVITY: "LET'S GET BETTER"
- ✓ AN ICELAND SYMPHONY: I. "THE MUSIC BOX"
- ✓ GRANT APPLICATION FILE #1
- ✓ WORK-IN-PROGRESS CHAPTER
- ✓ CHIEF SEATTLE 1854 SPEECH VERSIONS

The Better Patreon is both a site and a book series.
Every member at the time of publication gets each
new volume for free.

*alternative way of experiencing this Patreon. Note:
by purchasing any volume directly from The Better
Patreon Shop you also receive the File Vault of all the
multimedia items not possible to include in a book.*

AT DAWN: EARLY SHORT STORIES



This book collects my short stories so far. Written over a period of many years, they explore many fields:

Prose poetry, youthful night adventure, introspective science fiction, philosophical horror, chaptered dream exploration, humorous biographical detective fiction, seafaring sequel to one of a very young H. P. Lovecraft's stories, fragments...

This is the earliest harvest of my short fiction writing, from the dawn of my life. The stories were written when I was still looking for my most special things and the truest desires of my secret heart.

Having since found them, my future writings will mostly be very different. So while some of the stories in this collection feature strands I may develop further in those future stories, others will be the only ones of their kind I'll ever write.

But now, my fellow dreamer, it's dawn. The world is young again...

— Also available in a *Large Print Edition* —



**LAND OF YOUTH & BEAUTY:
EARLY POEMS**

by Simo Sakari Aaltonen

This book collects my poems so far. Written over more than two decades, they explore life in all its hues, dark and light and the rainbow in between:

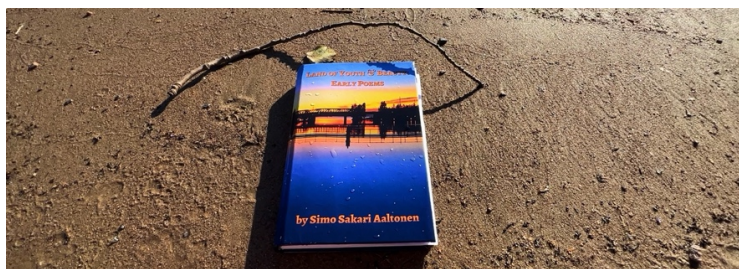
A marionette's dream, a pair of sonnets, a bayou tragedy, whirling donuts, nocturnes and nightmares, encounters in the dark and in sunlit moments...

Above and through all of it shimmers the greatest thing of all: the Land of Youth & Beauty — the magic theatre we enter when we love and feel truly loved.

“This happened when the world was young and love could never die, when the skies flamed every morning and it rained every night...”

— Also available in a *Large Print Edition* —

Land of Youth & Beauty: Early Poems — Lake Presentation



A short film (12:36) viewable on my official YouTube artist channel and my official site. The soundtrack was later released as my first single, “Land of Youth & Beauty”.

FILM



My early filmed works (2015–) are featured on my YouTube channel, presented on my Patreon, and embedded on my official site.

With few exceptions, these short works were conceived and executed entirely by me: writing, directing, cinematography, lighting, music, sound recording and engineering, featured art, editing, occasional acting, and everything else needed.

I look forward to working with actors in the future with my coming works in this field. You can find my full credits and these works listed on IMDb. I also actively continue with my screenwriting.

simosakariaaltonen.com
patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon
youtube.com/@SimoSakariAaltonen

MUSIC



From the bleakest dark to the brightest light, my music explores the full range of human experience. Behind it strives a soul hoping to reach likeminded others out there.

You can buy all my released music from my Patreon Shop or Bandcamp — where you can also read the detailed sleeve notes — and you can find it on numerous download and streaming platforms.

patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon
simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com

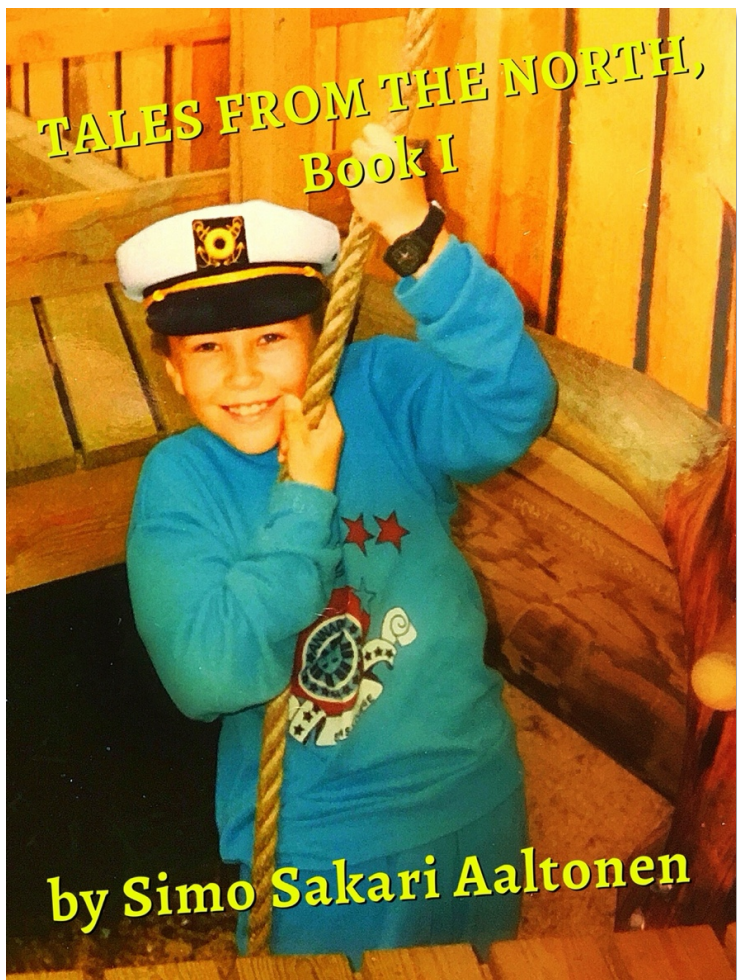
AN ICELAND SYMPHONY, Op. 1
— A Theatrical Symphony for All Ages —
2nd EDITION

XX. Love
(An Iceland Symphony)



by Simo Sakari Aaltonen

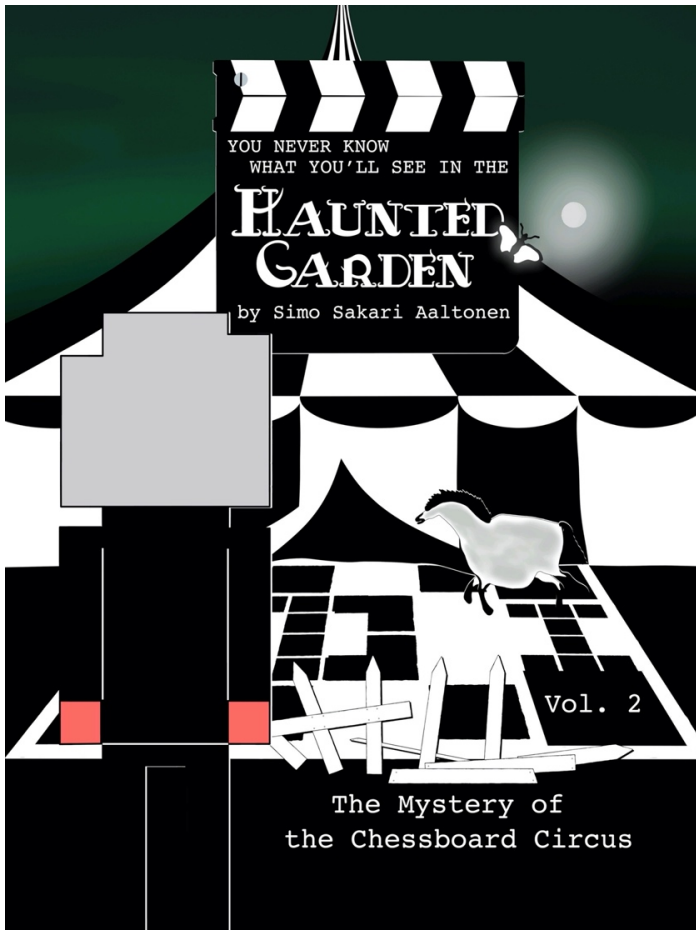
An Iceland Symphony is a musical composition of 21 sections involving theatrical elements. Its performance calls for musicians of all ages from the youngest to the oldest. This book includes the full sheet music complete with performance instructions.



Tales from the North, Book I is a set of 12 piano duets for two pianists and pianos. The pieces cover a wide range of moods, styles, and approaches using the composer's timeless musical language. 130 pages with a 10-page introduction.



You Never Know What You'll See in the Haunted Garden is a 3-part graphic novel featuring Rex the former game actor, Pregnant Horse of the Lascaux caves, and Alannah the butterfly. Vol. 1 introduces us to the mysterious Haunted Garden in Iceland with a series of visions.



Vol. 2: The Mystery of the Chessboard Circus *involves our heroes in an adventure where the visions find form in a series of events. And as with the first volume, clues to the future already await discovery in this, our second journey into the dream world known as the Haunted Garden. Vol. 3...?*



This 2020–2025 podcast used to be my central outlet for thoughts, feelings, passing fancies, memories, dreams, appreciations, and more.

Maybe a better metaphor would be a flickering campfire after a long day out in the wild — or in the inner wild. Or perhaps a random book with a flashlight under the blanket in a beautiful summer cottage, somewhere in eternity.

I recorded every episode extemporaneously, transcribed them afterwards, and eventually collected each season into these printed volumes. Part journal, part memoir, part musings on art and life, part strange humour, and part me reaching out to other souls out there.

Every edition brings every word of each season onto the printed page, for reading or leafing through at your own pace. This also makes the podcast available in its entirety to everyone with any hearing loss.

Unedited, unexpurgated, and with an introduction, a table-of-contents summary in the style of old books, and a varying number of footnotes in every volume.

—Simo



Diverse short writings about art, life, love, creativity, dreams, and more. Each volume features 124 concise chapters, perfect either for leafing through or taking in many at a time.

As a further embodiment of the things discussed on these pages, Vol. 2 evolves the series in an even freer direction. It also includes a number of extra chapters at the back, unseen since the author removed them from a website called Medium.

