

**ART  
&  
LOVE**

**VOL. 1**

**by Simo Sakari  
Aaltonen**



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*This is an extended sample of the book published in  
October 2020.*

*Art & Love, Vol. 1* by Simo Sakari Aaltonen. The  
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Other books by the author:

*At Dawn: Short Stories 2009–2021* (November  
2021)

*An Iceland Symphony, Op. 1: A Theatrical  
Symphony for All Ages* (May 2021)

*What Now with Simo, Season 1* (May 2020)

*What Now with Simo, Season 2* (October 2020)

*What Now with Simo, Season 3* (January 2022)

*You Never Know What You'll See in the Haunted  
Garden, Vol. 1* (March 2019)

*You Never Know What You'll See in the Haunted  
Garden, Vol. 2: The Mystery of the Chessboard  
Circus* (July 2019)



*This book is dedicated  
to Hildur Kristín Thorstensen  
who reminded me how to live*

*John Cage's Silence (1961) showed me  
how refreshing a book can be*

*David Lynch's Catching the Big Fish (2006)  
gave me further heart and courage to be light*



The play-concept as such is of a higher order than is seriousness. For seriousness seeks to exclude play, whereas play can very well include seriousness.

—Johan Huizinga: *Homo Ludens* (1938)



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# *Caring*

One life per customer.

How do we treat others, what feelings do we leave them to deal with, to get through their days and nights with?

It's one thing to laugh or make someone laugh, it's another to be able to smile or make someone smile.<sup>1</sup>

Do we care or don't we?

Do we care about the wounds we may know we've caused?

Do we think about what we leave someone to remember every time they look in the mirror?

---

<sup>1</sup> I learned this thought from Norm Macdonald in his *Norm Macdonald Live*.

*Caring*

Or for that matter, what we leave ourselves to remember when looking in the mirror, or when alone with our thoughts, maybe falling asleep, or trying to?

The memories are echoes of hurting or healing, of caring or not caring.

## *Philip Glass*

His composing is often like cutting cloth by the yard, but I don't mean that in a dismissive way.

Sometimes it results in just a piece of cloth, but other times, with other pieces — something like *Koyaanisqatsi* or the soundtrack to *The Hours* — the result is a beautiful and perfect garment.

The creation of all the different pieces is a necessary part of the process that results in those perfect garments.

# *Play*

Elsewhere in the same work as from which this book's epigraph is from, Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* (1938) — referring to all our playful activities in every field of life — he points out that in all mythology — I'd say all worthwhile mythology — there's always a playful dance on the borderline of humour and seriousness.

Without both, I'd say any person or work may be reason for concern. Healthy minds are playful.

By the way, I haven't read that book.

# *Art*

In his *Concrete* comics Paul Chadwick has artist Melissa Strangehands muse to herself in a short story called “Burning Brightly, Brightly...” (1987) that “Art took a wrong turn in the twentieth century”, leading to “art commenting on art... endlessly!” Rather than drawing from all of life.

Over the years I’ve come to value more and more many works that don’t build on or rely on other works at all. It’s so easy to make references, and so meaningless.

David Lynch’s work features extremely few references to other works.

An artist can gain so much from letting go of references. That opens up whole new spaces.

# ***The Bluebird of Happiness***

Every day for two months, I was visited by someone.

A bluebird of the spirit, and of mind, heart, and soul. She sang all day long.

She sat on my windowsill, perched on my shoulder, and tickled me with her beak when my energy ebbed, so I would laugh and keep going.

One day I could no longer contain my joy. I told someone about her. He was happy for me. But the next day she did not come back.

What I had failed to remember is, they are frightened by noise. There are those who would as soon kill one as see one.

So I start another day and she is not there. I made a grave error, one I have made before. I must go quiet and leave room for her again.

I can only hope she may learn to trust me again like I always trusted her, that I may be worthy once more of that trust.

There are many other fine things in the world — they too make it go around. But I would rather be visited by her.

For she is far finer, and life with her is much better.

# *Music*

Music for a while  
Shall all your cares beguile.

—Henry Purcell, 1692

## ***Season 3***

I like how you could show a great number of scenes to someone unfamiliar with it from the third season of *Twin Peaks*, and he or she would still have no idea what the series is “about” in the traditional storytelling sense. I really think that’s a great thing, and I admire that.

# ***True Character***

Our true character silently underlies all our words  
and actions, as the granite underlies the other strata.

—Thoreau: *Journal*, 3 May 1841

# *Healing*

We got regular shots of espresso extreme for a few precious weeks in the spring of 2017: Season 3 of *Twin Peaks*.

I was going through a difficult and painful time, but when a new episode became available, I got lost in the beautiful creativity of it all and forgot all my worries for those moments.

I've come to realise that's one of the greatest gifts a creative work can bestow on a person: to engage the attention so completely that nothing else can be thought of or felt while it lasts.

That's not escapism. It's healing.

A set of elements arranged in such a way that it alters your consciousness for the better.

## *Plain Bread*

In the library confrontation scene in the 1983 film version of Ray Bradbury's *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, Mister Dark, one of the autumn people, has a line about how his kind "butter [their] plain bread with delicious pain."

I could write a lot about this line and scene (the internal rhyme of "plain" and "pain", the delicious fact that "pain" in fact means in French "bread" — but I want to meander only up to a point, though admittedly one determined by the mood I'm in), but right now I was just thinking how that is the psychology of the tormentor and the bully in a nutshell.

Their lives are so plain, their hearts so empty, that they turn to causing pain to others. Because nothing feels worse than emptiness, hollowness —

plainness. They feel unloved, they receive no love, no caring, no appreciation. What could feel emptier in life than that?

So they hurt others in order to feel at least sadistic pleasure, and most especially those who they know to be loved, or at least worthy of being loved.

I'd love to quote at greater length from this scene, but copyright forbids. It's in many parts a lovely film.

## *Dreams & Sanity*

We would go mad without our dream lives, and it's no wonder creators like Lovecraft, Lynch, Bradbury, Kinsella, and others don't leave dreams out of their worlds.

I couldn't relate to any creator who saw dreams as unimportant nonsense. They are the other half of our lives, and so important.

Lovecraft wrote the following. It's the first paragraph in the first story of his I ever read, "Beyond the Wall of Sleep" (1919). I also once read this paragraph back in school, when it was my turn to hold the morning assembly speech or reading:

I have frequently wondered if the majority of mankind ever pause to reflect upon the occasionally titanic significance of dreams, and of the obscure world to which they belong. Whilst the greater number of our nocturnal visions are perhaps no more

than faint and fantastic reflections of our waking experiences — Freud to the contrary with his puerile symbolism — there are still a certain remainder whose immundane and ethereal character permits of no ordinary interpretation, and whose vaguely exciting and disquieting effect suggests possible minute glimpses into a sphere of mental existence no less important than physical life, yet separated from that life by an all but impassable barrier. From my experience I cannot doubt but that man, when lost to terrestrial consciousness, is indeed sojourning in another and uncorporeal life of far different nature from the life we know; and of which only the slightest and most indistinct memories linger after waking. From those blurred and fragmentary memories we may infer much, yet prove little. We may guess that in dreams life, matter, and vitality, as the earth knows such things, are not necessarily constant; and that time and space do not exist as our waking selves comprehend them. Sometimes I believe that this less material life is our truer life, and that our vain presence on the terraqueous globe is itself the secondary or merely virtual phenomenon.



**ABOUT  
THE AUTHOR  
(2026)**

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



**[simosakariaaltonen.com](http://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](https://simosakariaaltonen.com)

Patreon: [patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon](https://patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon)

Bandcamp: [simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com](https://simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com)

Podcast hosting site: [rss.com/podcasts/simo](https://rss.com/podcasts/simo)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/@SimoSakariAaltonen](https://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](https://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:*

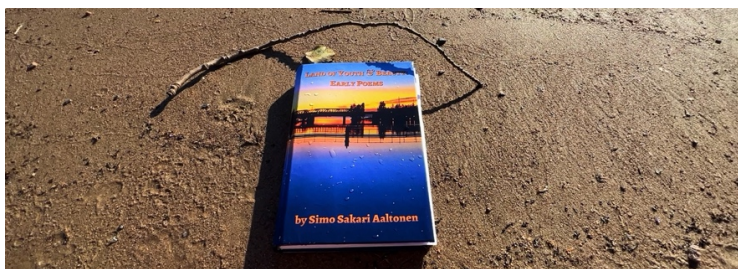
*A marionette's dream, a pair of sonnets, a bayou tragedy, whirling donuts, nocturnes and nightmares, encounters in the dark and in sunlit moments...*

*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](http://simosakariaaltonen.com)  
[patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon](https://patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon)  
[youtube.com/@SimoSakariAaltonen](https://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](https://patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon)  
[simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com](https://simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com)

# AN ICELAND SYMPHONY, Op. 1

— A Theatrical Symphony for All Ages —

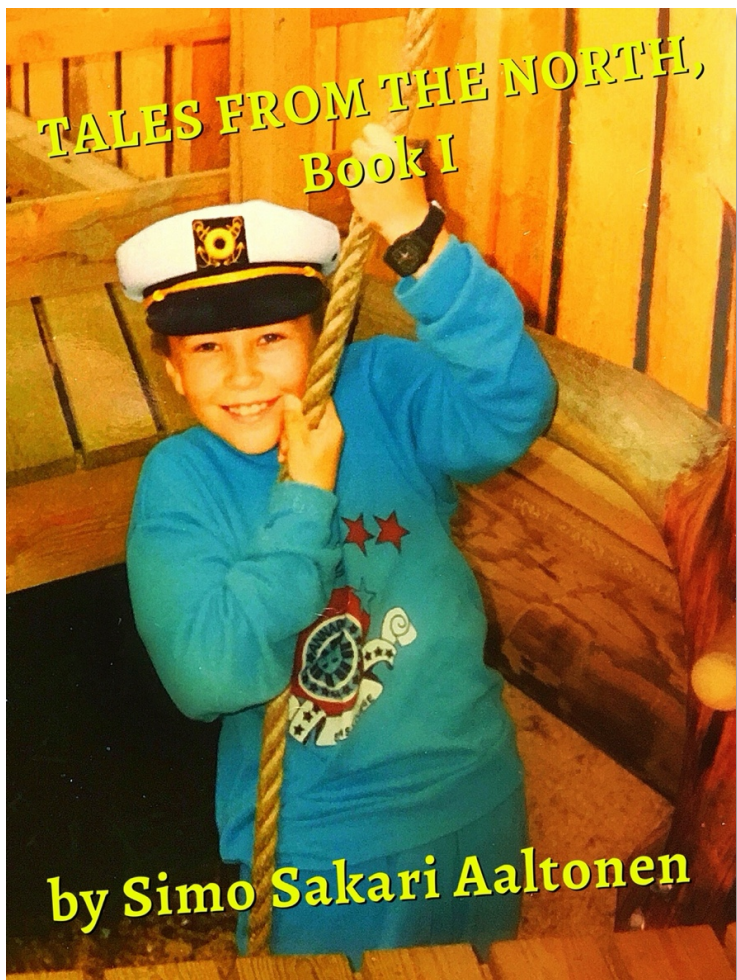
2nd EDITION

## XX. Love (An Iceland Symphony)

♩ = 48  
rit.  
con sord.  
p  
a tempo ♩ = 48  
con sord.  
p

by **Simo Sakari Aaltonen**

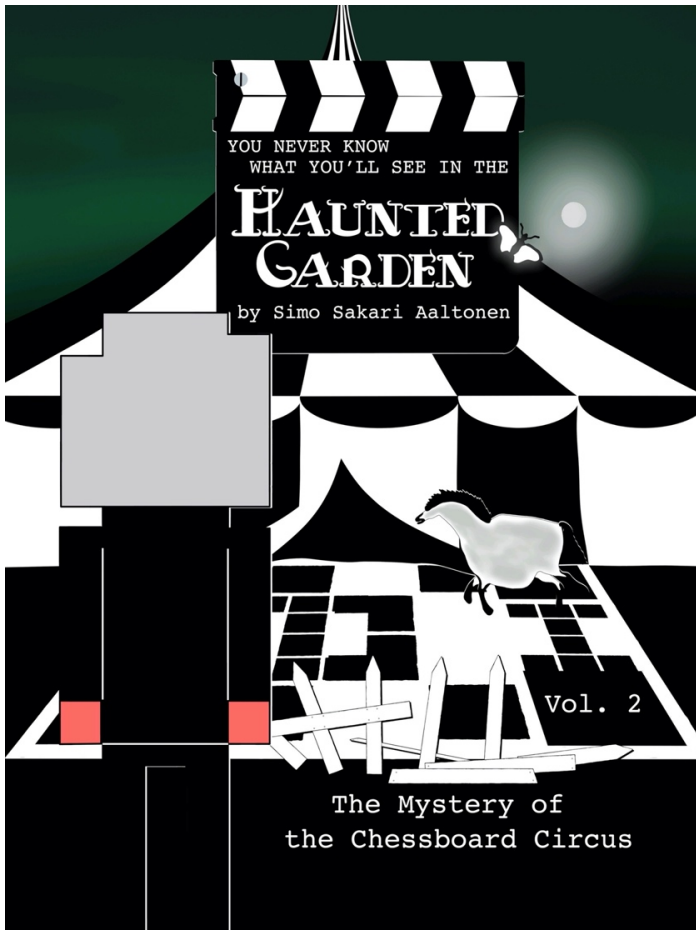
*An Iceland Symphony is a musical composition of 21 sections involving theatrical elements. Its performance calls for musicians of all ages from the youngest to the oldest. This book includes the full sheet music complete with performance instructions.*



*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.*



