

— Season 2 —

What Now



with Simo

by SIMO SAKARI AALTONEN

— Season 2 —

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What Now with Simo, Season 2 by Simo Sakari Aaltonen. The moral right of the author has been asserted.

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Other books by the author:

Art & Love, Vol. 1 (October 2020)

What Now with Simo, Season 1 (May 2020)

*For my parents
and my friends out there*

*Ever lighter, ever fresher
Lives of deep happiness and liveliness*

“Keep your eye on the donut, not the hole.”

—David Lynch

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absorbing enough to help me get through tough times — *Battlestar Galactica* — *Twin Peaks*: Season 3 — *Curb Your Enthusiasm* — Larry David — Differences from other situation comedies — Nothing tiresome — Not every line, scene, or character tries to make you laugh — Jeff — Better as a soap opera than any soap opera — Bright, healthy, sunny places — Enjoyable petty fights — Richard Lewis — Larry David and David Lynch emotionally intelligent — Italian mineral water in green bottles with blue etiquettes — Larry David doesn't drink, smoke, or use drugs — A model human in most areas of life — Unfortunately Hildur Kristín isn't going to kill me — Shower time — Welcoming messages — Rainbow on the floor

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wildfires result from human causes (ignorance, negligence, or malice) — 8:19 p.m. — Fragmentation and Season 3 — Matches lived reality — Life has both discontinuity and continuity — Every discontinuity opens up a space — Stories and imagination — Connecting the dots — Leaving audiences with ever less and less — A TV film called *House of Secrets* starring Bruce Boxleitner and Melissa Gilbert and featuring the music of Anthony Marinelli — Set in New Orleans — “If Ever I Cease to Love” (song of Mardi Gras) — Lyrics by George Leybourne — Several days later, 3:04 a.m. — Canadian pianist and writer Glenn Gould — The Aria (da capo) from Bach’s *Goldberg Variations* — A special person — Nothing done for show — Ahead of his time — Created a lasting legacy — VHS era — “Amarilli” by Caccini — “(Ghost) Riders in the Sky” by Stan Jones — Country (hillbilly) music — Bob Dylan — Norm Macdonald — 3:21 a.m. — Two kinds of people — Experiences that change you irrevocably — Disappointments — Norm is special — All I can do — A set of diary entries

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relaxed — 23 September, 12:31 a.m. — Rod Serling talking to a group of young writers — Norm Macdonald's comment on *The Twilight Zone* — Probably the best TV series of all time — If only one TV series could survive — Only the original series — A series that gives you something — Alienation, loneliness, times of feeling lost in life, etc. — Dark in a healthy, helpful way — *Northern Exposure* — Anyone who watches it will benefit from the experience — The opposite of heavy — Back to *The Twilight Zone* — The dark gem — Should play in all countries at odd hours — Always swimming in our collective electrical subconscious — A pure, clarifying anger — Rod Serling cared — Genuine mystery and imagination — A sense of theatre — Virtually all science fiction series try to be multimillion-dollar films — The real gold of the future — The virtues of theatre — Most creators of science fiction, horror, or fantasy have no sense of imagination and mystery — David Lynch was right — Mystery is no longer appreciated — It can bring any type of story alive — Things that won't — Mystery, imagination, heart, and magic — 7 October 2020, 8:31 p.m. — Long pause — Even one great song — Songwriting — There had never been a song like "Riders in the Sky" — The kernel from which Ennio Morricone unfolded his western music — A reminder about life — Now is the only time — Quote from Kim Stanley Robinson's *Pacific Edge* (1988, from the *Three Californias Trilogy*) — "What do you talk about when you're falling in love?" — When the apocalypse comes — Its own paradise — We don't get everything — Fate is a strange thing

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worthwhile stories — Layouts — Alexander Toth — Will Eisner —
Mr. Toth's uncompromising quality — Take care

2.16 *Eighty-Six, Art & Love,* 213 *and the Land of Youth and Beauty* (1:26:22)

Season 2 finale — Over 5,000 listens since 24 March 2020 — Dark
events and crossroads in time — David Lynch writing and
directing *Wisteria* for Netflix — Published *Art & Love, Vol. 1* — A
legacy creation — 100 years from now — Future-proof language —
Encapsulations and essences — The substance of a person's life —
124 chapters — Preserving or diminishing the value of a creation
— Imagine a theatre stage — The books of transcripts — Future
wishes — An Iceland memory — A country where childhood is
still possible — Intuition — *Norm Macdonald Has a Show* and *Norm
Macdonald Live* — Warmth — Jane Fonda, Michael Keaton, Drew
Barrymore — How rarely many comedians seem to enjoy their
work — The *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* soundtrack by Angelo
Badalamenti & David Lynch — Some of the warmest music ever —
Beauty as strong as the dark — Sensitivity — Speaking from the
heart — The ultimate guide for art, love, and life — Curt Swan —
Superman — John Byrne, Marv Wolfman — The kindest faces —
Superhero comics vs. the films — Russ Cochran — EC Comics —
Graham "Ghastly" Ingels — Stephen King, Ray Bradbury — The
Old Witch — *MAD* magazine — Steven Spielberg, George Lucas —
"Wicked Game" — Apple — The best tools — Financial
independence — A new leaf — Season 3 starting 1 January 2021 —

An Iceland Symphony — Reinventing — Art and freedom — Samuel Beckett and Philip Glass — For future listeners — Thoreau's *Journal* — Creative freedom — "I want to do this" — The 4-verse *Serena* poem about Oisín and Niamh — Tír na nÓg — The Land of Youth and Beauty — *Crash* and *Zzap!* 64 from Newsfield — Reading (1:14:01) — Roger Kean and Oliver Frey — Into the Christmastime — *Curb Your Enthusiasm* — *Seinfeld* — See you soon

***An Overview of The Ray Bradbury Theater (7:14)* 285**

Passport to magic — From 1985 to 1992 — Anthology series — HBO — USA Network — Mr. Bradbury wrote all 65 episodes — A secret world — Reconnecting — Falltime magic — Filmed in many countries — "On the Orient, North" — Père Lachaise Cemetery — Chopin's tomb — Amazing screenwriter — You never know what's next — "The Playground" with William Shatner — "The Crowd" — "The Town Where No One Got Off" with Jeff Goldblum — "Banshee" — "The Fruit at the Bottom of the Bowl" — "The Emissary" — "The Man Upstairs" — "The Small Assassin" — "There Was an Old Woman" — "The Dwarf" — "The Lake" — "The Wind" — "The Wonderful Death of Dudley Stone" — "The Lonely One" — "Great Wide World Over There" — DVD box set — Magic behind every door

***About the Author* 292**

Introduction

A freeform, wide-ranging podcast by writer and composer Simo Sakari Aaltonen on any topics foremost on his mind at the time of recording. The seasons are also collected in book form. Some favourite topics include creativity and all the arts — music, films, screenplays, fiction, poetry, comics, games, comedy, and everything in between. Messages from listeners welcomed for possible inclusion in an episode. Note that sending a recording for inclusion in an episode of this podcast implicitly gives permission to do so.

Dear reader,

Welcome to the second book of transcripts. It includes all of season 2, 41 footnotes, and a bonus chapter about *The Ray Bradbury Theater* featuring the transcript of an episode I did as a guest for another podcast.

When I started this podcast, I decided not to follow the stats closely, as this was and is almost an anti-podcast

podcast — I was doing none of the things podcasts usually do — and I had given myself permission to not second-guess myself and not think of things like target audiences or keeping things paced a certain way.

I wasn't aiming for as wide appeal as possible. That kind of thinking would lead to dishonest results and a tiring hamster wheel existence.

You could say *What Now with Simo* is aimed to appeal only to those to whom it appeals.

So it came as a surprise when towards the end of 2020 I saw it had passed 5,000 unique listens. That figure doesn't include repeat listens or bots. Many thanks to anyone who's listened, and remember, I love hearing any reactions or thoughts you may wish to share.

What Now with Simo continues to be a channel for me to share thoughts, feelings, memories, and reactions in a relaxed, spontaneous way.

In October of 2020 I started another non-fiction book series — years in the making — called *Art & Love*. It's about art and love — which for me covers everything in life.

Each volume of that will include 124 short chapters on things and people I've loved and felt nourished by. That makes it a series of love letters and also a sharp distillation of things I really care about. More than anything else so far, *Art & Love, Vol. 1* represents an essence of myself. I'm now working on my music and also fiction-based writing, and pouring as much warmth into those as I managed to get into that first volume.

I've been glad to hear from listeners that I've gotten even closer to the feel of a late-night radio show, and that's a direction I aim to continue in. If one day I get half as good at it as Chris Stevens in *Northern Exposure*, I'll be happy.

Wishing you a great day and good reading. Take care.

—Simo Sakari Aaltonen, Tampere, 8th of January 2021

2.1 New Horizons, New Energy, and What Happened in the Meantime

Hello, and welcome to episode 2.1, starting a whole new season of this podcast called *What Now with Simo*. And that's me, Simo Sakari Aaltonen.

And after a week-long break following the first season, I decided it was time to continue with the podcast. And with season 2, after listening to the earlier episodes and seeing what I want to do differently, this time I'm going to pick up the pace a little bit, and I am essentially putting myself on a clock. I'm aiming to make each episode of season 2 about 10 minutes long or a little less.

This is an arbitrary limit, but one that I felt would be interesting and useful to try for this second season.

* * *

While I was on break, many things happened.

My father turned 75 years.

David Lynch started a weather report on his YouTube channel called David Lynch Theater.

Norm Macdonald tweeted Dr. Jordan Peterson.

Bear McCreary hinted that his music from *Battlestar Galactica*, the reimagined one from the early 2000s, may be coming to Spotify.

Comedian Fred Willard passed on.

And I spent the last week doing certain things about which I'll have a couple of announcements to make next episode.

And with season 2, I'm also going to settle into a regular format now. This week will be still with episodes starting Tuesday and then every other day — so it's going to be Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday — but then from that week on, I will start posting new episodes every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Then I'm taking weekends off.

I'll also be doing something else on the days off from this podcast, but more about that next time. I look forward to talking about that, but — not quite yet.

* * *

So, my father is 75 years old. Happy birthday, Dad! And also thank you for listening to these podcasts.

I have great parents who have always supported me with whatever I have been doing in life, and they have always let me find my own way.

Which is rare, and I appreciate it. I've never taken it for granted.

* * *

David Lynch did these weather reports all through last week, and there was also, just recently, on his Twitter account a hint of something else also coming on that YouTube channel.

* * *

Comedian Fred Willard I knew mainly from *Norm Macdonald Live*, Norm's video podcast that ran for several seasons. And Fred was one of the guests on that. He was a very well-respected and liked comedian.

* * *

Status update:

I'm currently in Tampere in Finland. This podcast was born in Iceland at Hótel Vellir, where I recorded the first two episodes before needing to relocate back to Finland. And right now I am in downtown Tampere.

The weather is otherwise summery, but today we got some sleet, and the other day we got some snow. There are green shoots and even leaves on the trees, and I see some seagulls having fun.¹

So nature isn't quite deciding whether it's spring or winter, based on the weather.

* * *

A while ago I bought some roses. To me they are a reminder of things worth remembering.

¹ That was one way to put it.

I only bought them for a little while, and now they are drying up. I don't have facilities to keep roses alive for long.

But I noticed that they're not losing any petals, which reminded me of the last two times I bought roses. Those times it was for someone else. She mentioned to me later that neither of those roses dropped any petals, no matter how much times passed. I felt that that was only appropriate.

* * *

There's a Ray Bradbury quote that says: "You must stay drunk on writing so reality cannot destroy you."

Of course, I think it applies to all creativity, and my interpretation of that is that all of us have unconstructive thoughts or memories or things that, if we start thinking about them, they will only drag us down.

I'm not in favour of escaping reality or escaping things that we need to face. Especially things about our own

behaviour — things that we may have left messed up by our own actions. It is necessary to process difficult things.

But there does come a point after which thinking about the same things over and over no longer serves a useful purpose. And that is what I took away from this quote this last time that I saw it some days ago.

And I have been putting that into practice by keeping very busy, especially writing, this last week. Some music also.

* * *

But I noticed that the podcast — doing this podcast — had a beneficial effect that I had a feeling it would. Which was to re-energise — give more energy also in other areas. And last week that turned out to be even more true than I thought it would — than I believed it would.

But again, that's something I want to talk more about next episode. I am sticking to my 10-minute plan, and I'm not going to run over.

So with this episode, I'm not going to get into any other topic than just talking about things in a general way.

Listening to the 1st-season episodes was necessary for me. It wasn't always quite comfortable, for various reasons that it's not necessary to go into. I can say that I definitely have now some better idea of what to do and how to do it, exactly.

To make really sure that I don't run over the 10 minutes this first episode, I'll already start aiming towards closing the episode.

Before I finish, I want to pose a question, without giving any answer to it.

It is a topic that interests me.

* * *

Imagine your favourite TV series. Or you can think of several, if you have many.

My question is:

What role does art play in that world? In that series.

Are there artists? Is there art?

If so, in what capacity, in what kind of role?

Where do they appear?

Is art a part of any of the main characters' lives in a meaningful way?

Are there theatres?

Are there comedians?

Is there humour that comes surprisingly and suddenly breaks up the moment?

Are there paintings? Are there street shows?

How about music? Are there composers? Are there singers? Are there bands?

And how involved are the characters — out of the ones that may have something to do with art — how involved are they with it?

And does it have an impact on their lives?

I'll talk more about this topic at another time, but I thought right now it would be most useful to simply present the

question and phrase it in such a general way because there are so, so many series that we each may or may not like.

But in this case, whichever that favourite series may be, that's what I then meant in your case.

* * *

I'm feeling quite energised. There are things I am purposely keeping out of my mind because there is nothing I can do about them.

So even though certainly there are things in my life that I wish were differently, I can only focus on the areas that I can affect. So that's where I'm putting all my energy now.

I'm exercising. I'm eating well. I'm living healthy.

And I very much look forward to sharing those news next time. I don't like to — actually — leave like a teaser like this,² and I don't aim to make a habit of it.

I'm wishing my listeners a great week and good night.

² Or a monster sentence like this.

**ABOUT
THE AUTHOR
(2026)**

**SIMO SAKARI
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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*)

Solid Gold: David Lynch — 90 Concise Chapters on Him and His World (*2026*)

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.*

**SOLID GOLD:
DAVID LYNCH**

*90 Concise Chapters
on Him and His World*
**by SIMO SAKARI
AALTONEN**

*A kaleidoscopic, appreciative dive into the world of
David Lynch via 90 chapters examining as many key
facets of his life and works.*

This is the first book I ever wrote fully during the existence of my Patreon, members of which were able to follow the process week by week as I posted three new chapters every Monday over a period of 30 weeks from late 2025 to early 2026.

David Lynch is one of my favourite artists in all the many fields he created in. From first seeing Twin Peaks in my teens to immensely rewarding and inspiring delvings in later years, my life — and this world — would clearly be immeasurably poorer had he never existed and created.

The approach I selected grew out of the one I had adopted for my Art & Love series. This is a book about David Lynch for readers from all over the world and for all time.

Creating is the coolest thing that we can do.

—David Lynch

AT DAWN: EARLY SHORT STORIES



BY SIMO SAKARI
AALTONEN

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:

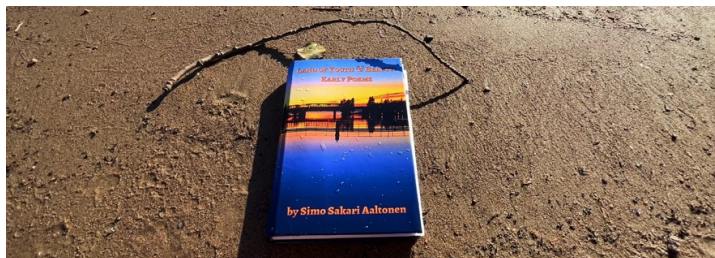
*A marionette's dream, a pair of sonnets, a bayou
tragedy, whirling donuts, nocturnes and nightmares,
encounters in the dark and in sunlit moments...*

*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

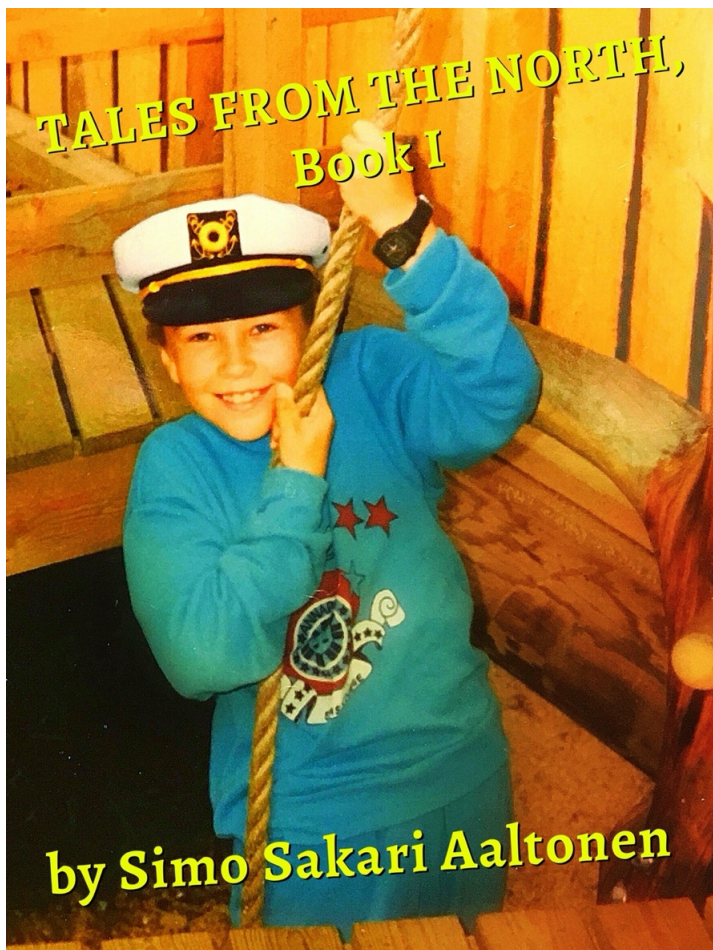
AN ICELAND SYMPHONY, Op. 1
— A Theatrical Symphony for All Ages —
2nd EDITION

XX. Love
(An Iceland Symphony)



by Simo Sakari Aaltonen

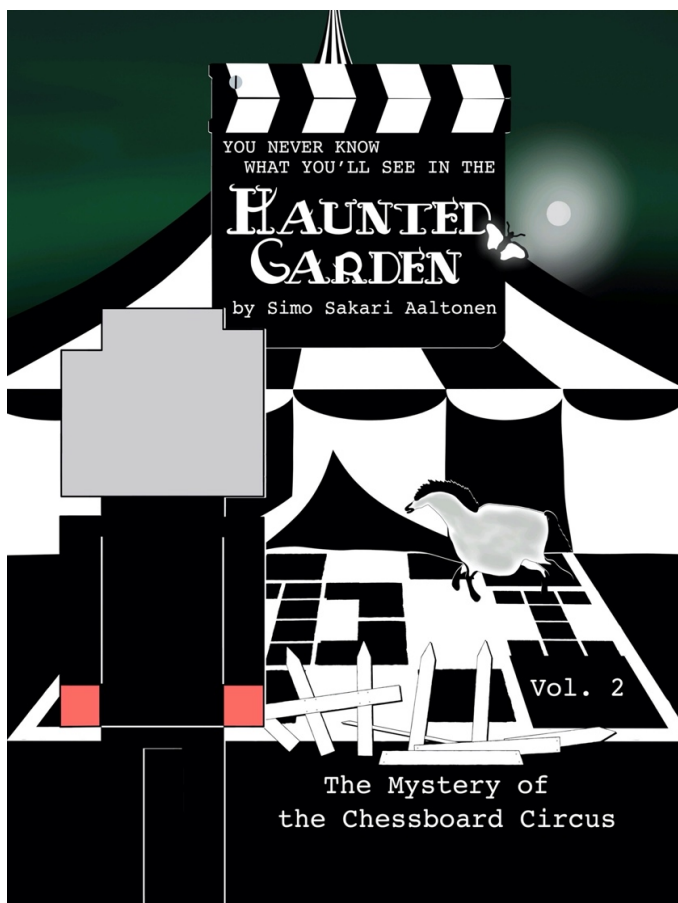
An Iceland Symphony is a musical composition of 21 sections involving theatrical elements. Its performance calls for musicians of all ages from the youngest to the oldest. This book includes the full sheet music complete with performance instructions.



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.

— A WORD-FOR-WORD TRANSCRIPT OF THE 2nd SEASON —

This podcast is my central outlet for thoughts, feelings, passing fancies, memories, dreams, appreciations, and more.

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 record every episode extemporaneously, transcribe them afterwards, and eventually collect 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.

This edition of the second season of the podcast brings the more than 41,000 words onto the printed page, for reading or leafing through at your own pace.

These books also make the podcast available in its entirety to everyone with any hearing loss.

Unedited, unexpurgated, and with an introduction, table-of-contents summaries in the style of old books, and a few footnotes.

Also part of this season are the lyrics for the Mardi Gras song “If Ever I Cease to Love”, my poem for the game Serena, and “An Overview of The Ray Bradbury Theater”.

—Simo