

— Season 4 —

WHAT NOW



WITH SIMO

**by Simo Sakari
Aaltonen**

— Season 4 —
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This is a sample of the book published in December 2025.

What Now with Simo, Season 4 by Simo Sakari Aaltonen. The moral right of the author has been asserted.

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*For Stephen Abbott,
Josh Mandel,
Maren Elina Nötzelmann,
Michael Shaw,
Bartosz Skobiej,
and Roberta Vaughan*

Thank you for all your kindness and support

“We are not here to do what has already been done.”

—Robert Henri, *The Art Spirit* (1923)

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— Now there are all kinds of approaches — A short, immature vignette — Lost or not? — Right person or not? — Not difficult to tell — Do you end up letting go of your greatest aspirations? — Does your world get ever narrower? — Kick down the fence — Find life again — “Some thoughts from the Twilight Zone.” — *The Twilight Zone* largely grew out of the creations of Ray Bradbury — Discussed often in Blu-ray commentaries — Rod Serling — *The Ray Bradbury Theater* — Glad things worked out the way they did — The world is richer for it — Stephen Sondheim — An episode of *Curb Your Enthusiasm* — Officer Krupke — Krup you

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theme for *Inside the Actors Studio* — *Twin Peaks* theme by him and David Lynch — Highly relistenable — Sometimes you hit those times in life where the heaviness of what you need to experience is overwhelming — You can't express love generically — Devalues expressions of love — The companion playlists: "What Now with Simo 1952–1955" and "What Now with Simo 1956–1959"¹ — No longer tweeting about new additions — On Spotify — Sharing beautiful creations with others

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Northern Lights, Op. 2 No. 1 for Lap Steel Guitar: "A Beginning Is a Difficult Place to End" (@ 0:00)

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"Season 4 Theme — 2nd Anniversary Opening" (@ 0:00) — Two years from recording the first episode at Hótel Vellir in Iceland — My mother's passing — My parents — "2nd Anniversary Lyre" (@ 1:52) — New leather couch from Denmark — "Passages Dark and Light: Parts 1–4" (@ 2:40) — Note regarding earlier symphony discussion — *At Dawn: Early Short Stories* for a later episode — The three first *Psycho*

¹ Later I shortened the names of all these playlists to just "What Now X–X" — took out "with Simo", which from then on was used only in connection with the podcast and the transcript book series.

films — Anthony Perkins — Lasting use of language — David Lynch
 and Ray Bradbury — Henry Purcell: “What Power Art Thou” from his
 opera *King Arthur* (1691) — David Lynch swearing — The music of
 Ron Jones — Sleeve notes from *Film Score Monthly* — What *Star Trek*
 was originally meant to be — Once upon a time — A person like a
 dragon — Philip K. Dick quote from his novel *VALIS* (1981) — Ideas —
 Intuition — Everything connects — Authentic and right — Don’t fake
 it until you make it or you may break it — Negative space — A novel
 can be any length — Freshness from leaving out all the extraneous
 things — *The Hours* (2002) — *The Elephant Man* (1980) — *Twin Peaks:*
Fire Walk with Me (1992) — *INLAND EMPIRE* (2006) — Healing
 devastation — Best possible advice for dealing with trauma —
 Readings of Ray Bradbury — “The April Witch” (1952) — How can we
 forget beauty? — *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977) — The
 suburb scenes — Roy Neary played by Richard Dreyfuss — Metaphor
 for creativity — Artists can eat their cake and have it too — *Northern*
Exposure did that often and well — John Williams quoting from “When
 You Wish Upon a Star” from *Pinocchio* (1940) — Happy ending? I think
 not — Immature vs. mature — *Field of Dreams* (1989) — Dignity —
 Actors with dignity often get exploited for undeserving stories —
 Bryan Cranston — Jonathan Banks — The emotional toll this takes on
 the makers and viewers — I must speak my own convictions —
Breaking Bad and *Game of Thrones* as examples of immature storytelling
 — Modularity as a creative principle — Quote about good teachers —
 Paul Chadwick’s *Concrete* — Melissa Strangehands — Art commenting
 on art — Drawing from life itself — Art in your favourite TV series —

A rock garden — Fragmentation — More on art in story worlds — Do comedians exist? — Moments that would shatter the psychotic intensity of many series — “C’m on, man. Don’t be stupid.” — *Twin Peaks*, *Northern Exposure*, *Seinfeld* — Dreams of Norm Macdonald, Philip Glass, and David Lynch — All the things stories are — One thing, two things, three... — A series for the young at heart — Dear listener of the future — Drink cans — H. P. Lovecraft poem: “The Garden” — “Lovecraft’s Garden” (@ 42:41) — Fake drinking in films and TV series — Imagine a world without potatoes — I had a dream of you today — About half done with the remaining notes — Cheering anecdote — All the music has been composed and performed by me — The future of my music — A video can give the best possible sense of how a book looks and feels — Good wishes to good people — Much love — “Season 4 Theme — 2nd Anniversary Closing” (@ 53:20)

***4.10 In Which I Go on a Picnic* (30:00 | 24 May 2022) 143**

Good spot for a picnic — Green grass — Forgot the pillow — Shade — Sandwich — S.Pellegrino sparkling natural mineral water — Shoes — Rainbow-coloured blanket — Helmet — Why haven’t I done this before? — I don’t believe in beating yourself up — Easygoing — A long time ago — Academia — Dry place — Parties and picnics — May Day — That part of the day — In warmth with a breeze — Basic things most important — Fresh air — The smell of grass — Colours — Tastes — Smells — A touch — Senses — *Art & Love, Vol. 1* — Next part — Chapter on sensuality — Not hedonism — Indulgence leads to unhappiness — Distorted looking-glass versions — What I see right

now — Sunglasses — Bottle — Black bag — Shoulder bag from
 London — Zoom recorder — Lime-coloured helmet — Adjusting
 mechanism — Cars — Buildings — Hotel — Red brick factory —
 Caterpillar beer festival tent — Lakeside — Future topics — *At Dawn:*
Early Short Stories — *Passages Dark and Light* — Ambushed —
 Amusement park — Creepy Carnival — Everything has its own time
 — Pushing, imposing, forcing — No — Eating the sandwich — Your
 battery — Eating outside — Perfect picnic moment — Very early
 summer — Buzz — “It was a picnic kind of a day...” — Mouthful —
 Taking photos — Thanks for joining me — Moving on — Sun — Find
 myself a city bike — Packing up — Paper Tiger — You’re on my
 leather gloves now — For protection — Crumbs for birds — Down the
 hill — Past the dandelions — Take care

4.11 Lake, Land of Youth & Beauty, 157 **and Plans (26:08 | 13 Jun 2022)**

Good morning from the lake — Back to rowing — Future presentations
 of my books — *At Dawn: Early Short Stories* — *Land of Youth & Beauty:*
Early Poems — Hardcover and ebook — Low profile for the moment —
 The Land of Youth and Beauty — Feeling truly loved — Then you feel
 young and beautiful — Chronological age — Chris Stevens in *Northern*
Exposure — A kind of companion book — Title, cover design, nature —
 No assembly line — So many things — Screenplays and stage plays —
 Poems from a time of searching — From my heart, soul, and secret self
 — The most special things — Many styles and topics — Now a very
 clear sense of direction — Markers to my future — The commentary

section of *At Dawn* — Dates and comments — Classical poems — Sonnets — Other rhyming styles — Different rhyme schemes — “Oisín and Niamh” — From the game *Serena* (2014) — Free verse — Stream of consciousness — Spare poems — Happy, unhappy, absurd, funny... — No dates — Pedantry and lyricism rarely go together — Earliest poem from the year 2000 — Magazine of the Department of English — Only hardcovers and ebooks in the future — The beauty of the hardcovers — “These are now the final versions of these books.” — Royalties about the same — No gouging — Every piece of art is a result of the artist’s whole life — Not only the mechanical action — Avoiding getting killed for thousands of days and night — Great relief — Weight off my shoulders — A local lake monster — Finishing things — Need to update website — Readings and other types of events — Videos — A right time for everything — Forgot to bring a hat — Sun beating down on my head — Looking forward to working on future creations — Backlog project — Many things to do and feel — Great feeling — Bare stage or fresh page — Visual art — Early music — Transcripts — Long intervals between episodes — David Lee Homb — Pierre Estève — Some future episodes — More room to breathe — Episodes on a more regular basis — Need to prioritise — Future presentations — Dedicated episodes — Spontaneity — Thank you for joining me on my little rowboat — Beautiful morning — Take care

***4.12 In Which I Go Rowing Without Talking* 175**

(20:15 | 17 Jun 2022)

A short afternoon row from beginning to end without talking, with

some quieter parts when filming.

4.13 *Wild at Heart, Negative Space,* 177 *and Petering Out* (8:21 | 24 Jun 2022)

Weather totally amyaazing — Midsummer — Drifting and talking — Quick course correction — Too close to a marker — A whole episode about negative space — Other thoughts — David Lynch film *Wild at Heart* (1990) — Starring Nicolas Cage and Laura Dern — Beautiful sequence — Gas station — Drive through a desert — Trying to get good music on the radio — About 100 miles to go — Horrible stuff — Violence, death, health issues — Lula — Sailor Ripley — Powermad (band) — Letting go — From heavy metal to a classical song — Richard Strauss's "Im Abendrot" ("At Sunset") (1948) from *Four Last Songs* (*Vier letzte Lieder*) — "Abendrot": "evening red" — Different versions of the song — Rowing — Great tempo — Finnish for "world": *maailma* — "earth" (*maa*) + "air" (*ilma*) = "earthair" (*maailma*) — Concise way of saying "planet" — Earth surrounded by air (the atmosphere) — Negative space

4.14 *Sky Flowers, Just One More Thing,* 183 *and Three Ravens or Crows* (14:09 | 30 Jun 2022)

Back at the lake — Episode of updates — Water perfect for swimming — One of my very favourite things in the world — Immersing myself in water — Lake, swimming pool, bathtub — When I start to float — Your own private world of blueness — The good type — The fresh

smell of the lake — If you could bottle that... — Pierre Estève's new album *Sky Flowers* — On Bandcamp — You never know what to expect — All kinds of musical realms — Musical explorer and adventurer — Flowers of Change — Fresh listening — Store selling used books and magazines — The memoirs of Peter Falk: *Just One More Thing* — *Columbo* — A book very much after my own heart — Varied and modular style — Kin to David Lynch's *Catching the Big Fish*, John Cage's *Silence*, and my own *Art & Love* series — Mostly short chapters — Great use of titles and subtitles (subheadings) — Adventurous and fun books — Small chunks — More light on negative space — Thinking and talking became a second-best choice — An illustration of negative space — Negative space defines the work — It opens and frees you up — Book designs I dislike and like — A joy or a chore — Why I do things the opposite way in my own books — My music now on numerous streaming and download sites and social media platforms (e.g. Instagram and TikTok) — *Passages Dark and Light* — All this is legit — The music remains completely owned by me — Will never give away the copyright to my work — Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon Music — More than 150 platforms — Royalties — Art full-time — Living the dream — A huge plus of Bandcamp — Warm thanks to my first supporters there — Stephen, Roberta, and Michael — You made this possible — Working on new albums — Folk song "The Three Ravens" — Spotify playlist for 1956–1959 — Raveny rendition by Frances Faye — Three crows on the wooden bridge — On the cover of *At Dawn: Early Short Stories* — When things like this happen — Something I believe

4.15 *Northern Dream, Morricone and Tiomkin, and Tremendous Freedom* (13:02 | 20 Jul 2022) 193

Northern Exposure dream — Rich and long — Many scenarios and segments — Dreams are a gift — Places familiar from earlier dreams — Another puzzle piece — Stan Jones song “Riders in the Sky” (1948) — A seed for Ennio Morricone — Great Western music — Finding my own way — Sergio Leone asked him to write in the style of Dimitri Tiomkin’s Western soundtracks — Born in Russia, moved to the United States — “Do Not Forsake Me, Oh My Darling” from *High Noon* (1952) — Later instrumental music — The two influences — Spotify playlist “What Now 1956–1959” — Performance by Nelson Riddle — Music composed by Tiomkin — Two John Wayne movies — *Rio Bravo* (1959) and *The Alamo* (1960) — Johnny Puleo & His Harmonica Gang’s “You Are Always in My Heart” — Now in the 1960s — Journey through music — So far listened to 72,268 tracks — Created 3,201 playlists — New: “What Now 1960–1964” — Name and cover art changes — Great freedom — The Scorpions: “(Ghost) Riders in the Sky” — The Ventures: “Pipeline” and “Spudnik (Surf Rider)” — Firing the imagination — This freedom never existed before — How elusive it is — Only some very special artists have the key to that freedom always — David Lynch’s *INLAND EMPIRE* (2006), *Mulholland Dr.* (2001), and *Twin Peaks* season 3 — So much more to do with that freedom — Freedom and fragmentation — With regard to my own work — It comes through you — It’s somewhere out there — Flowing through what you do — Can’t be faked — You know the real thing immediately

— Marketing tricks — May take a long time — Finding your way to ever more true and real things — Goes for life as well — Don't settle if... — Feeling truly loved — "You are the one. I don't want anyone else."

4.16 Creative Basics, Visions, and Fog 203

(47:35 | 25 Oct 2022)

"In the Fog, Deep" (@ 0:00) — Season 4 finale — Grief — Doors closed — *An Iceland Symphony* — Progress in life — Age and new directions — Making music — People driven to art and people doing art as a hobby — Creating something new — David Lynch and his life's work — Inspirations — Ideas — Never copy — Basis in reality — Possible misinterpretation of my aims — Ray Bradbury — Pierre Estève — Vangelis — *Twin Peaks* — The last thing anyone should expect from me — The real thing — Waste of talents — Our special things — A turning point — Receiving and creating — Journey through the history of music through its recorded forms — Late 19th century — No longer getting something from something — Repetition and repertoire — Horrifying — Beethoven — Wagner — Enough — Future generations — Bob Dylan — A supposed basic truth — Wiped out — Taboo — A dystopian vision for future children — Mozart — Schubert — Anton Bruckner — Just examples — Speaking to young hearts and souls — Endless, oppressive obligation — Limits — Fresh things — An adult mistake — 1,000 years from now — New music speaking to people now, in the future, and perhaps for all times — Outgrowing things — Superheroes — Enjoyable shared experience watching some of the

films — Marvel — Specific context — Correction about Alexander Toth — DC Comics — Layouts — Educated guess about what happened — Told to tone down his creativity — Warren Publishing horror comics — Happens over and over in the world of art — *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* (1992) — Quentin Tarantino — *Twin Peaks* season 3 — Like fine wine — Importance of leaving things out — Uses of language — Faddish creative styles — References — Longevity — Later audiences and audiences around the world — Changing perspectives — “Weird” — Philip Glass — You can’t address the present — Here now, gone tomorrow — Sense of responsibility — Theoretical frameworks — Missing the point — Genuinely possible to do new things — Formula scenes — “All is lost” — Calculating manipulation — Mr. Lynch’s freshness — Inner lives — “Inciting incident” — “The idea tells you everything.” — Wrapping up — “Land of Youth & Beauty” (@ 35:03) — Full audio from the “Lake Presentation” video for *Land of Youth & Beauty: Early Poems* — Farewell for now

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Introduction

Dear reader,

This is the second-to-last volume of this book series in which I reproduce every spontaneously recorded episode of my 2020–2025 podcast *What Now with Simo* faithfully and with annotations.

Every episode of this season included either my own music or soundscapes or natural background sounds such as rain. All this music has been subsequently released in standalone audio form, and you can find my liner notes for these music releases at the back of the book.

Following those, there's a series of playlists of lasting music of various kinds.

I've compiled these lists on Spotify, but I always wanted to preserve them also in book form with my text notes on each track. This way these playlists will last as long as my books do, rather than possibly first eroding (individual tracks disappearing), then maybe vanishing altogether

along with the streaming platform itself.

I can't begin to estimate how many thousands of hours of work these lists represent, but I hope they may in some small way help perpetuate good music and help others make some discoveries.

At some future date, with further accumulation of tracks and notes on them, this endeavour may warrant a book of its own, but I want to make sure that what I have now does get preserved.

This has been a labour of love. Sometimes I go back to these lists myself and end up finding my own spirits renewed.

* * *

In the introduction for the previous volume, I brought up the topic of some health concerns I had needed to start attending to.

I've made progress on some of these, while others represent a longer-term challenge.

In any case, I feel the best place for me to discuss these things is the private Patreon I launched on 3 April 2025. It's called The Better Patreon, and it's been my online creative home ever since — and indeed creativity is its first and foremost focus.

For more on The Better Patreon, see the new spread dedicated to it in the catalogue section at the back of this book.

* * *

As I write this, I've arrived at even more of a crossroads than when I wrote that previous introduction.

So I'm sending out a call here as well as through more private channels:

I'm looking to uproot my life from its current perch. My "day job" of translating films and TV series has dried up, and translating was never my calling anyway.

If you know of any opportunities for someone of my various talents, do let me know. I am ready to go at a moment's notice.

Finland has not been supportive in my times of need or with my creative endeavours, and I'd love to be able to live elsewhere again, whether returning to Paris (which I've often missed), Iceland, or the UK, or for the first time experiencing Germany or Italy, for example...

I need only two things: a new way to secure a steady income to keep financing my creativity, and a place to live.

* * *

This introduction would be hopelessly incomplete if I failed to stress how much the support of the early members of The Better Patreon has meant to me.

They have been my greatest and most concrete boosters, and the new members who've joined more recently have further lifted my spirits.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

I have many plans for further developments, and I always value hearing any reactions or thoughts you may have, so please do let me know if you have any special wishes for the future.

Like I've mentioned before, I'm equally happy dealing with all aspects of creativity, and I want to make the experience as rich as I can.

One thing helping in this regard is that Patreon fortunately keeps adding new functionality from time to time, and members will be seeing the impact of some of the recent improvements soon.

Thank you again for having been there for me. I hope I'll be able to return the favour. Take care!

—Simo Sakari Aaltonen, Tampere, 10 November 2025

4.1 Welcome Aboard, a Look Back, and a Look Forward

(@ 0:00: “What Now with Simo: Season 4 Theme”)²

(@ 0:33: “Fresh Start”)³

Hello, welcome to the first episode of season 4, with fresh cover art,⁴ a new theme tune, and so much more to talk about.

* * *

Season 3 turned out to be really thrilling for me. I got to have really wonderful, long discussions with David Lee Homb and Pierre Estève.

² All music heard during this season — apart from the traditional Christmas song that makes up episode 4.5 — was composed and rendered by me, so I only give the titles of the various pieces. This season 4 theme was later released as track 23 of my 2024 album *The 13th Tale*.

³ This track appears on the album *The 13th Tale* (track 28) accompanied by rain, with the title “Fresh Start (With Rain)”.

⁴ This cover art was a small section of my digital drawing “Gold Dust” from 2015. A larger section of it was later seen on the wraparound cover of the season 3 transcript book as well as — well, you’re looking at the season 4 book now. In my future plans is a book collecting all my visual art so far, naturally including this drawing in full.

I'm very happy with and proud of those episodes, and all of us — me, David, and Pierre — have received great feedback about those.

* * *

Now I don't actually remember whether I already mentioned this at some point — I know that I kept forgetting it in the past:

I've meant to mention that the music I featured in all the episodes of season 3 before the ones with Pierre — in which all music was from him — the theme tune I featured before that was by me.⁵

One of my principles has been for a long time that I don't use any ready-made elements.

If I make a drawing, every line and every stroke is drawn by me, and with music, there's no ready-made elements — no audio loops, drum patterns, or anything. So every note is by me.

⁵ Different parts of the "Season 3 Theme" appear on tracks 18–21 of *The 13th Tale*.

There's never going to be any library music on this podcast.

* * *

I was very happy to learn that Amazon now lets me also make hardcovers of my books. And one is already online: the book of sheet music for *An Iceland Symphony*.⁶

That went online a day or two ago, and I can't wait to have that in my hands. I'll be sending it out to various places out in the world.

* * *

This season I think I'm going to do a lot of short episodes, going back to the original idea of selecting topics of conversation very spontaneously.

So much has happened that I already want to be commenting on, but I want to keep this one just an introductory episode.

⁶ For this and my other works so far, see the catalogue section at the back of this book.

* * *

When I first started doing this podcast, it was with the idea of mostly sharing my thoughts on various things — thoughts and feelings and memories and dreams.

But at the back of my mind was always a hope that on special occasions I would love to talk with people I admire and find interesting, like David and Pierre. So that was really a dream come true, to get to do those episodes.

And of course Pierre's generous permission to use as much of his music for those episodes as I wanted was thrilling and something I wish I could do more of in these episodes.⁷ But because copyright and licensing laws are the way they are, I can't do this fully as the kind of radio show-type creation as I would like.

I love Chris Stevens in *Northern Exposure*. I would love to be able to play a lot of music, but he either didn't care about the licensing and copyright side of things or his wealthy employer, Maurice, was taking care of that side —

⁷ I meant featuring music in general, like a radio DJ could.

or had people taking care of it.

In any case, it was a special treat to intersperse a lot of music in my discussion with Pierre.

Pierre and David really gave wonderfully of themselves, and I wish everyone could hear those episodes. They would be among my first recommendations for where to start with this podcast for any new listener.

* * *

Speaking of David, he has just published his first book of poetry, called *Awake, I Dream*, and it's now available on Amazon. I very much look forward to getting my hands on that.

* * *

This year I've been very fortunate to get to talk for the first time face to face — over the Internet, but still, on video — with three people that it was immediately easy to talk with, as though we had always known each other.

* * *

Just a few words about my future plans:

I'm continuing to take the next steps with *An Iceland Symphony*, creating the best possible sounding versions of those 21 segments of the work. That will still take quite some time.⁸

I will be finishing this year my first book of short stories,⁹ and that's the first of my books that will come out as a hardcover first — but of course also as a paperback and an ebook.

Then as I continue to make new episodes of this podcast, I'll also catch up with my transcribing for season 3. I fell a little behind on that due to having so many things to do, and that means I have some catching up to do.

My aim is to have the season 3 book of transcripts out in

⁸ This referred to my attempt to create an orchestral suite featuring a selection of the pieces that make up this symphony, executed with quality virtual instruments, but this attempt needed to be put on hold.

⁹ It took a little longer than I anticipated, but not much: *At Dawn: Early Short Stories* was published the following year, in February 2022.

January.¹⁰ That one will include the full transcripts of my discussions with David and Pierre. They've both given permission to do that, and so that volume will be extra special for that reason also.¹¹

* * *

There's a million other things I would like to be saying, but there's time for that in other episodes of season 4.

Welcome back to any returning listeners, and welcome aboard for any new listeners. Thanks for listening, and have a great day, or evening, or morning, or afternoon.

Still, I'll say according to my tradition:

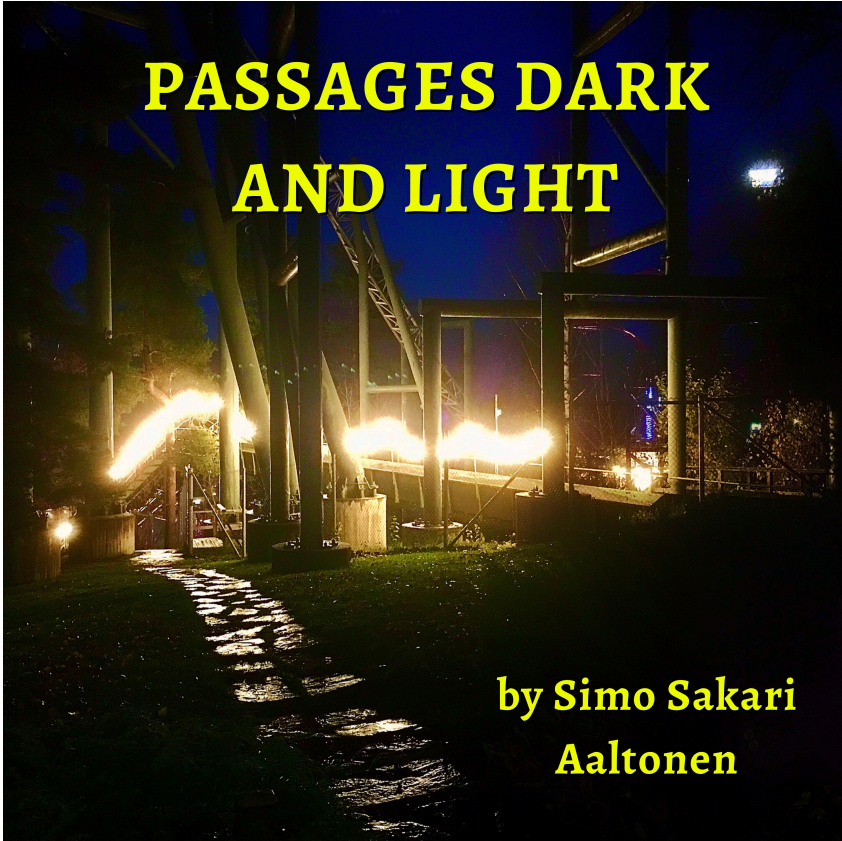
Good night. Take care.

(@ 6:18: "What Now with Simo: *Season 4 Theme*")

¹⁰ This did happen in January, only two years later — 2024 rather than 2022. There was a lot more to do than I expected, both on the creative side and in my life in general.

¹¹ The delay mentioned in the previous footnote worked out for the best in the end: Pierre and I later recorded another two-part discussion between seasons 4 and 5 — called "Pierre Estève 2022–2023 Special", Parts 1 & 2 — and that was then also included in the season 3 book.

Liner Notes



1. "Passages Dark and Light (Single Peaks Version)" (4:47)
2. "What Now with Simo: Season 4 Theme — 2nd Anniversary Opening" (0:39)
3. "2nd Anniversary Lyre" (0:37)
4. "Passages Dark and Light: Part 1" (14:23)

5. **"Passages Dark and Light: Part 2" (12:50)**
6. **"Passages Dark and Light: Part 3" (12:47)**
7. **"Lovecraft's Garden" (1:15)**
8. **"'The Garden' by H. P. Lovecraft (Reading)" (1:15)**
9. **"Passages Dark and Light: Part 4" (9:02)**
10. **"What Now with Simo: Season 4 Theme — 2nd Anniversary Closing" (0:38)**
11. **"Passages Dark and Light (Extended Peaks Version)" (11:37)**

Passages Dark and Light is my first album. It consists of the full soundtrack of the 2nd anniversary episode (4.9) of my podcast *What Now with Simo* along with variant versions of some tracks.

For this episode I created a more serene version of the season 4 theme tune as well as the extended piece "Passages Dark and Light" made up of peaks and valleys. The first and last tracks present two versions of this with just the peaks without the meditative guitar valleys.

The difference is that the opening “Single Peaks Version” features no repeats, whereas the concluding “Extended Peaks Version” includes all the repeats as in that anniversary episode, meaning there are also chord changes and therefore moments not featured in the shorter version.

“Lovecraft’s Garden” accompanies in the episode my reading of H. P. Lovecraft’s poem “The Garden”, and the reading itself follows the music-only track.

—Simo Sakari Aaltonen

Special note 2025: When I released this, my first album, in 2022, among the first few to buy it on Bandcamp was Roberta Vaughan, who died tragically young in 2025.

Thank you so much for your support and kindness, Roberta.

Released 17 May 2022.

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***“What Now”
Music Playlists***

These are playlists of pieces of music that I:

1) have come across on my journey through the history of music through its recorded forms, 2) believe to have lasting qualities that mean people will be able to enjoy them long into the future, and 3) found the time and energy to add to these lists while also writing brief notes on each item thus added.

None of these lists are or ever can be comprehensive. They simply feature a selection of good pieces of music. The selections bear absolutely no relation to what may have been popular or acclaimed over the years. The fame of the performers was likewise irrelevant to my selections.

And some of my favourites, like Vangelis, don't feature almost at all, because that would've been an impossible task for now.

On the other hand, all my favourite pieces from *Northern Exposure* and *Twin Peaks*, for example, are included, with all the tracks appearing in their appropriate year ranges.

1952–1955

A very young **Tony Bennett**'s original 1951 version of "**Blue Velvet**". The Bobby Vinton version that was to inspire David Lynch for his 1986 film *Blue Velvet* would appear some 12 years later, in 1963.

Frankie Laine's version of one of my favourite songs since childhood (I first heard it in a Commodore 64 computer game), Dimitri Tiomkin's "**Do Not Forsake Me, Oh My Darling**" or "**The Ballad of *High Noon***", from the 1952 film.

"**Sous le ciel de Paris**" ("Under the Sky of Paris") a.k.a. "**Waltz of Paree**" performed by **The Melachrino Strings**. A 1951 film song composed by Hubert Giraud. I especially like the more restrained parts with accordion and discreet choral humming.

Another version of "**Sous le ciel de Paris**" / "**Waltz of Paree**", sung by **Alma Cogan**. This song became strongly associated with the city, and Ennio Morricone echoed it much later in his soundtrack for the 1988 Roman Polanski

film *Frantic*.

The original **Tex Ritter** version of “*High Noon*” / “**Do Not Forsake Me, Oh My Darling**” from the 1952 Fred Zinnemann film itself, which my Finnish visual arts teacher showed us in the 1990s.

A pre-50s recording, re-released in 1952, by **Richard Hayward** of “*Johnny, I Hardly Knew Ye*” a.k.a. “**When Johnny Comes Marching Home**”. The audio here is muffled, but I think this is an unmistakeable sign of a great song: that hearing it can hearten you even in the midst of deep sorrow.

Jack Parnell’s slow instrumental jazz version of George Gershwin’s “**Summertime**”.

From **Jean Ritchie**’s 1952 debut album *Jean Ritchie Singing the Traditional Songs of Her Kentucky Mountain Family*, on which she accompanies herself on the Appalachian dulcimer:

✓ “**Hush, Little Baby**”.

✓ “**The Cuckoo**”.

Frankie Laine's committed version of Hank Williams's "**Your Cheatin' Heart**".

Vera Lynn's 1953 version of "**We'll Meet Again**". Her first version in 1939 had featured only her singing and an electronic keyboard, whereas this is an orchestrated, hi-fi, chorally accompanied recording.

Louis Armstrong's version of "**A Kiss to Build a Dream On**", a sunlit song in his performance, and one of the numerous songs I may have first heard in *Northern Exposure*, in this case in 1.06 "Sex, Lies, and Ed's Tapes".

Terry Shaw's version of "**Misirlou**", the Eastern Mediterranean folk tune Dick Dale would make famous a decade later — as "Miserlou" — through his 1962 surf rock recording. Several recordings of this tune had already appeared before this point. As far I know as I write this, the origins of the tune remain unknown, but it was being played by musicians at least as far back as the 1920s.

The fragile, Hebridean "**Peat-Fire Smoothing Prayer**" (lovely title) as performed by the **Glasgow Orpheus Choir**, issued on LP in 1953 with a spoken

introduction by the conductor, **Sir Hugh Robertson**.

The **original Broadway cast** recording of “**March of the Siamese Children**” (or “**March of the Royal Siamese Children**”) from the Rodgers & Hammerstein musical *The King and I*. This piece is put to good use in the second episode of *Northern Exposure*, 1.02 “Brains, Know-How, and Native Intelligence”.

The **original Broadway cast** recording of “**Every Man Is a Stupid Man**” by Cole Porter, one of my favourite songwriters, from his 1953 musical *Can-Can*.

Nat King Cole’s version of one of the most beautiful songs of all, “**Autumn Leaves**” (“**Les feuilles mortes**” — “Dead Leaves”). It was composed by Hungarian-French Joseph Kosma. The original French lyrics are by a French gentleman, Jacques Prévert, and these English ones are by the American gentleman Johnny Mercer.

Dean Martin’s signature tune “**That’s Amore**”, with **Dick Stabile and His Orchestra**. Music by Harry Warren, lyrics by Jack Brooks. Impossible for me not to like the lines, “When the moon hits your eye / Like a big pizza pie /

That's *amore*". This version of the song features in *Northern Exposure* 4.06 "On Your Own".

The **Ronnie Scott Jazz Group**'s calm jazz version of Hoagy Carmichael's 1938 "**The Nearness of You**". This composition would also be featured by composer Ron Jones in an exceptional season 1 episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* called "11001001".

American oboist and conductor **Mitch Miller**'s version of "**Under Paris Skies**" ("**Sous le ciel de Paris**") — the song's third appearance on this playlist.

Hank Williams's own version of his "**Your Cheatin' Heart**". Featured earlier on this playlist was Frankie Laine's cover. I like this song because it's a love song, but not one of the sickeningly pleading ones so common both then and still. This has self-respect — sure, alongside other, less admirable qualities in the character of the "I".

At first I thought it embraced virulently inflammatory pro-clown rhetoric, but then I had to add **Édith Piaf**'s "**Bravo pour le clown!**" as the earliest song I know that creates the feel of a circus performance in progress. Then I looked up

the lyrics. Dark? Yes. Also good.

Nat King Cole's version of **“Dinner for One Please, James”**, a song by Michael Carr, 1935. Elegant sanity in a moment of sadness. In this exact context, perhaps to help wash away the tragedy of that depraved circus clown.

Yves Montand's live version of **“Les feuilles mortes”** / **“Autumn Leaves”** from his 1953 recital at the Théâtre de l'Étoile in Paris. Earlier was featured Nat King Cole's English version.

Duet **“The Girl on the Rock”** from **Gordon Jenkins's** album *Seven Dreams* — a “musical fantasy” and one of the earliest concept albums. Interviewing himself in the 1960s, *Famous Monsters of Filmland* editor Forrest J Ackerman (he wanted that initial without a period / full stop) named it one of his favourite songs. It is a sojourn into dream country.

“Brush Up Your Shakespeare” from the 1953 film version of Cole Porter's 1948 musical. **James Whitmore** as Slug and **Keenan Wynn** as Lippy.

Mozart's **Adagio and Rondo for Glass Harmonica, Flute, Oboe, Viola, and Cello in C minor, K. 617**. In this recording, a celesta is used instead of a glass harmonica. **Karl Swoboda** (celesta), **Camillo Wanausek** (flute), **Friedrich Wächter** (oboe), et al. Again, it's not used here, but this beautiful and enchanting instrument, the glass harmonica, would be chosen by James Horner for his perfect soundtrack for the 1989 film *Field of Dreams*.

Hoagy Carmichael (music) and Johnny Mercer's (lyrics) playful tale of time travel and music history, "**The Old Music Master**" (1943), from Carmichael's album *The Stardust Road*, with him singing and playing the piano.

Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings* by **Vladimir Golschmann** and **The Concert Arts Orchestra**. Many versions of this would be recorded before one day David Lynch would hear a particular one on the radio and choose it for his 1980 film *The Elephant Man*. That other version (Previn and the London Symphony Orchestra), which I also discussed once on my 2020–2025 podcast *What Now with Simo*, is included on the 1975–1979 playlist.

The 1954 **Ronnie Scott** version of “**Laura**” (music by David Raksin, lyrics by Johnny Mercer), a song originally composed for the 1944 film *Laura*. A dreamy song with haunted lyrics by Mercer, though here wordless. I’m pretty sure it went into the mix to inspire David Lynch and Mark Frost for *Twin Peaks*.

Carl Dolmetsch (recorder) and **Joseph Saxby**’s (harpsichord) recording of 12 variations on “**Greensleeves**”. That song in many versions used to be one of my favourites and also one I sang most days, several years ago, to improve my sense of pitch. I love the sound of wooden recorders. At music lessons in school, we only played cheap plastic ones, which to me have always had a harsher sound.

The lovely duet “**Stranger in Paradise**” from the musical *Kismet* (1953) as performed by **Richard Kiley** and **Doretta Morrow** of the **original Broadway cast**. The theme is by Borodin, adapted by Robert Wright & George Forrest (music and lyrics).

The doo-wop song “**Sh-Boom**” as performed by **The**

Crew-Cuts. The first time I consciously remember hearing it was in Dennis Potter's 1990s miniseries *Lipstick on Your Collar*.

Percy Faith's slow, mixed-choir rendition of "**The Loveliest Night of the Year**". The song dates back to 1888 as "Sobre las olas" ("Over the Waves") by Mexican Juventino P. Rosas. Irving Aaronson (music) and Paul Francis Webster (lyrics) adapted it for *The Great Caruso* (1951).

Gaspar Sanz's "**Folias**" from the late 17th century arranged for and performed on the guitar by **Narciso Yepes**. The innumerable Folía/Folia pieces and this thematic material's enormous influence over the centuries are endlessly interesting to me.

Coming across **The Four Freshmen** for the first time was thrilling: a richer new level of vocal quartet singing with a much broader emotional range compared to other groups up to that point. From their 1952 album *Voices in Modern* (1952):

✓ "**It's a Blue World**".

✓ **“We’ll Be Together Again”**. A hopeful twist in the tale, or an “upon further reflection” after the previous song.

“Rock Around the Clock” by **Bill Haley & His Comets**.

The rock and roll era has started.

Nat King Cole’s rendition of **“Smile”**, a piece composed by Charlie Chaplin for his 1936 film *Modern Times*. The lyrics were written later, in 1954, by English lyricists John Turner and Geoffrey Parsons, and Mr. Cole was the first to record the song with these lyrics.

Jackie Gleason’s instrumental version of Hoagy Carmichael’s **“The Nearness of You”** from the album *Music, Martinis, and Memories*.

Frances Faye’s groovy version of **“Summertime”**, music by George Gershwin, lyrics by DuBose Heyward, from the 1935 opera *Porgy and Bess*.

Joni James’s version of **“Autumn Leaves”**. It has the right feeling.

Frank Sinatra’s version of **“Get Happy”** from the 1954

album *Swing Easy!* This 1930 song was the first one that Harold Arlen (music) and Ted Koehler (lyrics) created together. Performed memorably by Ray Wise as Leland Palmer in *Twin Peaks*.

The Norman Luboff Choir's version of "**Red River Valley**", a traditional song first heard in the original seasons of *Twin Peaks* on the jukebox at the Double R Diner and then much later, in season 3, as sung by Harry Dean Stanton accompanying himself on the guitar.

The medieval plainsong "**Dies irae**" from *Prima missa in commemoratione omnium fidelium defunctorum* ("First Mass in Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed") performed by the **Monks' Choir of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Martin, Beuron** under **Maurus Pfaff**. A melody familiar to nearly everyone from its numerous quotations by countless composers over all these years in all media featuring music.

Hermann Necke's "**Nightingale Song**" played on an authentic 19th-century music box from the collection of George and Madeleine Brown.

Texan pianist **Red Camp**'s combo's fresh take on Gershwin's "**Summertime**".

More rock with "**Shake, Rattle, and Roll**" by **Bill Haley & His Comets**. Originally a rhythm and blues song, written in 1954 by Charles F. Calhoun a.k.a. Jesse Stone.

Les Paul & Mary Ford's sharp version of "**Mr. Sandman**".

"**Mr. Sandman**" by **The Four Aces**, the version heard in the 1985 film *Back to the Future*.

Five more versions of the lovely "**Stranger in Paradise**" from the musical *Kismet*. Already featured earlier was Richard Kiley and Doretta Morrow's version. These are by **Mantovani**, **George Shearing**, **Norrie Paramor**, **Eddie Calvert**, and **Tony Bennett**.

Les Baxter's version of "**Unchained Melody**". Originally composed for a 1955 film called *Unchained*. Music by Alex North, lyrics by Hy Zaret. This rendition is the one heard in Dennis Potter's 1990s miniseries *Lipstick on Your Collar*.

Sudden bomb of percussive art: **Moondog**'s EP (Extended Play record) *On the Streets of New York*. According to

Wikipedia, “Philip Glass has written that he and Steve Reich took Moondog’s work ‘very seriously and understood and appreciated it much more than what we were exposed to at Juilliard.’” Eight tracks:

- ✓ **“Avenue of the Americas 51st Street”.**
- ✓ **“2 West 46th Street”.**
- ✓ **“Lullaby 2 West 46th Street”.**
- ✓ **“Fog on the Hudson 425 West 57th Street”.**
- ✓ **“Utsu”.**
- ✓ **“On and Off the Beat”.**
- ✓ **“Chant”.**
- ✓ **“From One to Nine”.**

Michel Legrand’s version of **“Sous le ciel de Paris”** (**“Under Paris Skies”**) from his 1954 album *I Love Paris*. I first became aware of him in youth from his music for Sierra’s 1995 adventure game *Torin’s Passage*, which was written by 1987 *Leisure Suit Larry’s* 1946 creator Al Lowe.

Herbert von Karajan conducting the **Philharmonia Orchestra** in Pietro Mascagni’s **Intermezzo** from his 1890 opera *Cavalleria rusticana* (Italian for *Rustic Chivalry*).

This interpretation is light and free in a way I think many of this conductor's later recordings — of any music — aren't. Though not in this version (I don't know which recording was used), this piece appears in *Northern Exposure* 5.22 "Gran Prix" as Ed fights the demon of External Validation. It's a multiple reference: Ed loves films, including those of Martin Scorsese and Francis Ford Coppola, and this Intermezzo is heard in Scorsese's *Raging Bull* (1980) as well as in Coppola's *The Godfather Part III* (1990). Neither of which, to this day, I've been interested enough to see.

Teddi King's version of Hoagy Carmichael's 1932 song "New Orleans".

An orchestral version of the first movement, the **Adagio sostenuto** ("Slow and sustained"), of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* by **Arthur Fiedler** and the **Boston Pops**. The slight record crackle adds greatly to it.

Hank Thompson and His Brazos Valley Boys in "The Wild Side of Life". This 1952 song, whose lyrics by Arlie Carter and William Warren include "I didn't know God

made honky tonk angels”, used a country melody that was already in the public domain at the time. This rendition is heard in the *Northern Exposure* episode 3.07 “Roots”.

Kitty Wells released her reply song, **“It Wasn’t God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels”**, written by J. D. “Jay” Miller using the same public domain melody, later the same year. Hers is heard more than once in *Northern Exposure*, first in 1.03 “Soapy Sanderson”, long before the song to which she provided her response from a woman’s point of view. The fact that both songs are featured over the course of the series is a good example of its mostly egalitarian nature — especially before the last two seasons executive-produced by David Chase (original family name: DeCesare).

“Misionera” by **Los Paraguayos (Agustín Barboza, Digno Garcia, & Luis Alberto del Paraná)**, featuring Garcia on the Paraguayan Indian harp. A thrilling, far-seeing piece.

Chet Baker’s version of **“The Thrill Is Gone”** from his 1954 album *Chet Baker Sings*, with him on vocals and trumpet. This is a 1931 song with music by Ray Henderson and lyrics by Lew Brown. This version has the emotional

directness of Angelo Badalamenti's and David Lynch's collaborations. Only the very unlucky and the very lucky never experience what the song's about. The very unlucky because they never experience a true love that could grow cold, and the very lucky because they find — the first time — one that never does.

Glenn Gould's 1955 versions of the **Aria** and the **Aria da Capo** from Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. I love most his much later interpretation, but I respect how it was clear from the beginning he wasn't going to play anything in a stale manner. I have fond memories of playing this composition over and over with someone special in Paris on an iOS piano app.

"Audrey" by **The Dave Brubeck Quartet** from the 1954 album *Interchanges '54*. A cool jazz piece by Brubeck and **Paul Desmond**. (Brubeck: piano. Desmond: alto sax. **Bob Bates**: double bass. **Joe Dodge**: drums with brushes.) A precursor for Angelo Badalamenti & David Lynch's *Twin Peaks* work. (Audrey!)

Three **Moondog** pieces:

✓ “Rim Shots”.

✓ “Improvisation in 4/4”.

✓ “Improvisation in 7/4”.

These were in front of a live audience. As mentioned in *The Gramophone*, drummers Max Roach and Art Blakey were “said to go out of their way to hear him play.”

“**Uranus Unmasked**” from the 1955 album *Harry Revel’s Music from out of Space* as performed by **Stuart Phillips’s Orchestra** — the Stu Phillips of later *Battlestar Galactica* and *Knight Rider* fame.

From **Cyril Stapleton**:

✓ “Under Paris Skies” (“Sous le ciel de Paris”).

✓ “Autumn Leaves”.

Louis Armstrong’s version of “**Mack the Knife**”. Like many of my favourite songs, this one by Kurt Weill (music) and Bertolt Brecht (lyrics, wonderfully translated into English by Marc Blitzstein) creates its own special world in the magic circle of art. The song is from the Weill/Brecht duo’s *Die Dreigroschenoper* (*The Threepenny Opera*) (1928),

and the song's original German name is **“Die Moritat von Mackie Messer”** (**“The Ballad of Mack the Knife”**). I read that Mr. Armstrong spontaneously threw in the name of Weill's wife, later widow, Lotte Lenya, who had starred in the original 1928 German production, as one of Macheath's — Mackie Messer's or Mack the Knife's — victims.

Julie London's 1955 version of **“Laura”** — music by David Raksin, lyrics by Johnny Mercer — from her first LP, *Julie Is Her Name*. This song in its many versions and with its particular lyrics must have been some part of the inspiration for the character in *Twin Peaks*.

The trouble with Caccini's song **“Amarilli, mia bella”** (early 17th century) for me is that I've heard the most beautiful possible performance of it (not publicly released anywhere), and it's not any of the available recordings, so they all pale for me by comparison. But here's **Irma Kolassi's** 1955 version, with **Jacqueline Bonneau** at the piano.

“March of the Siamese Children” from Rodgers & Hammerstein's musical *The King and I* with **Richard**

Rodgers himself conducting the **New York Philharmonic**. Some version of this piece was heard in the second episode of *Northern Exposure*, 1.02 “Brains, Know-How, and Native Intelligence”, also featuring a number of other show tunes. This series is one of those special ones from around that time — the 1980s and 1990s — that I consider complete musical educations on all kinds of music.

The first time I heard **The Hi-Lo’s** version of “**Summertime**”, I was impressed but felt surprised enough by some of the things they do that I wasn’t sure I liked it. The second time, I understood they were giving expression to the euphoria and beautiful madness of summer.

Billie Holiday’s version of Rodgers & Hart’s 1934 song “**Blue Moon**” from her 1952 album *Billie Holiday Sings*. Her version is heard more than once in *Northern Exposure*, including in one of the finest of them all, the season 1 finale, 1.08 “Aurora Borealis: A Fairy Tale for Big People”.

The Crew-Cuts in “**Earth Angel (Will You Be Mine?)**”.

The Weavers (Ronnie Gilbert, Lee Hays, Fred Hellerman, Pete Seeger) on 24 December 1955 at Carnegie Hall in the

following:

✓ **“Kisses Sweeter Than Wine”.**

✓ Merle Travis’s **“Sixteen Tons”**. I first came across this song in the beautiful, short-lived Appian Way / Warner Bros. / National Geographic / Disney+ series *The Right Stuff* (2020) while translating that whole season into Finnish.

✓ **“Hush, Little Baby”.**

The Chordettes in **“Mr. Sandman”**, 1954. This version is used perfectly for a perfect scene in that lovely *Northern Exposure* episode, 1.08 “Aurora Borealis: A Fairy Tale for Big People”.

The Platters in two songs written by songwriter Samuel “Buck” Ram, who was at that time their manager and producer. Both songs feature in Dennis Potter’s 1990s TV miniseries *Lipstick on Your Collar* (along with the same group’s 1956 “My Prayer”):

✓ **“Only You (And You Alone)”.**

✓ **“The Great Pretender”.**

Nat King Cole's "Unforgettable" from his 1952 album *Unforgettable*.

Danny Kaye singing "**The Inch Worm**" or "**Inchworm**", from the 1952 film *Hans Christian Andersen*, which is a fictional take on this Danish author of fairy tales. (I only saw it as a child.) The song was written by Frank Loesser (music and lyrics), and this mellow rendition is featured in the great *Northern Exposure* episode 4.03 "Nothing's Perfect", in which Chris falls in love with the pi-calculating mathematician Amy, perfectly played by Wendel Meldrum.

Percy Faith & His Orchestra in a serene instrumental version of "**The Song from Moulin Rouge**", originally composed by Georges Auric for the 1952 John Huston film *Moulin Rouge* under the title "It's April Again". This rendition fittingly accompanies a 1950s-style dinner in *Northern Exposure* 2.07 "Slow Dance".

**ABOUT
THE AUTHOR
(2026)**

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



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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.

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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.

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✓ 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"

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**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:

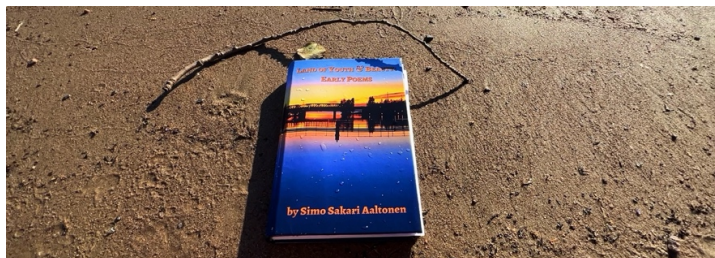
A marionette's dream, a pair of sonnets, a bayou tragedy, whirling donuts, nocturnes and nightmares, encounters in the dark and in sunlit moments...

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.

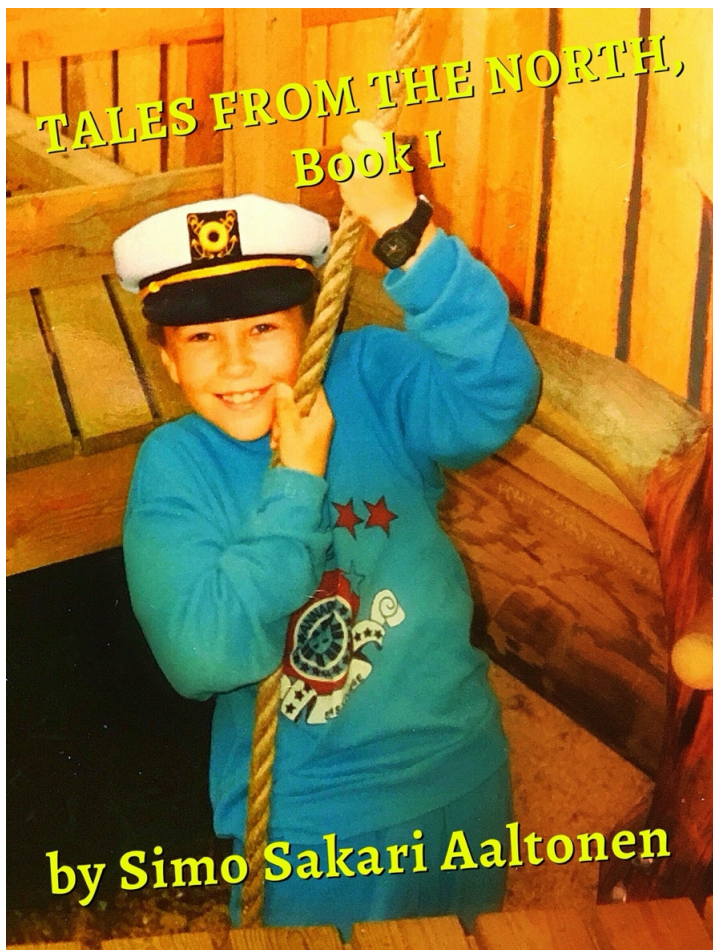
patreon.com/TheBetterPatreon
simosakariaaltonen.bandcamp.com

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

XX. Love
(An Iceland Symphony)



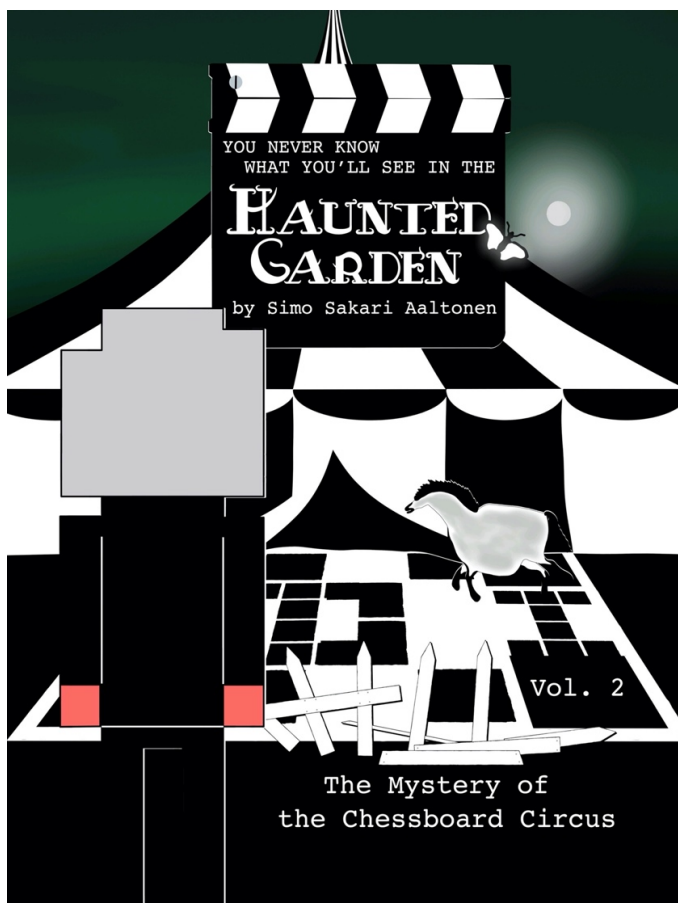
An Iceland Symphony is a musical composition of 21 sections involving theatrical elements. Its performance calls for musicians of all ages from the youngest to the oldest. This book includes the full sheet music complete with performance instructions.



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.

— Season 4 —



PODCAST TRANSCRIPTS

with annotations

and notes on the soundtracks

1910–2024 PLAYLISTS

of lasting music

with personal commentary