

iF1050 Vanessa Wagner – Inland
Release date: April 26th, 2019

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One enters **Inland** as if exploring an inner landscape, roaming freely through a gently throbbing natural world, in which each note is a step and every sound forms a path. The piano transports the listener to an island; in the middle of the clouds, in a twilight forest, a white desert, along winding or convulsing rivers, on the skull of a Fauvist mountain, in chaotic and fragile glass cities.

The title of this new album by **Vanessa Wagner** refers to John Cage's *Imaginary Landscape* (1939), one of the first works to use electronic devices. After all, when Cage wrote his manifesto *The Future of Music* in the late 1930s, he already knew that the merging of written and electronic music would bear exquisite fruits.

The album is the lone protuberance from 2016 album *Statea*, on which Wagner, alongside producer Murcof (she on the piano, him manning the machines), reinterpreted pieces from the fathers of minimalism: Arvo Pärt, Philip Glass, Morton Feldman, Erik Satie, or John Cage.

The same secret conversation between the artist, the piano, and contemporary music is now continuing on *Inland*. Making more with less, the album turns long harmonies into multicolored prisms, miniature detailed embroidery, sighs and breaths, syncopated or restrained chants. In this brave new world, sounds exist for themselves, and silence comes to life. While the repertoire remains in the minimalistic vein, it gives priority to living composers, of which almost all are still active.

The repertoire's cartography has been extended: its (male or female) composers can be American, of course, but also French, Belgian, German or Latvian.

The choice of works and their sequencing was dreamed up as a sort of storytelling. Between familiar melodies and unknown rarities, the pianist dug deep to find previously unreleased pieces.

Within the cornucopia of Wagner's career, **Inland** stands as a hitherto unknown intimate and dream-like space. The album is both the fruit of her maturity and a new temporality that she is now exploring – a secret conversation between her spirituality and the deep connection she maintains with nature, the elements, and living matter.

The **Inland** journey begins with the vision of iconoclastic Moondog, who claudicates over a modest ritornello, and continues with French composer Emilie Levienaise-Farrouch's *Louella*, like a volatile caress. On the way, we

- 1_ Für Fritz (Chaconne in A minor) - Moondog (1:43) - FR T09 19 000 20
- 2_ Louella - Emilie Levienaise-Farrouch (1:40) - FR T09 19 000 21
- 3_ Ornament 2 - Bryce Dessner (1:52) - FR T09 19 000 22
- 4_ Ornament 3 - Bryce Dessner (6:32) - FR T09 19 000 23
- 5_ Etude n°9 - Philip Glass (2:21) - FR T09 19 000 24
- 6_ Quiet Rhythms: Prologue and Action n°9 - William Susman (4:47) - FR T09 19 000 25
- 7_ Railroad (Travel Song) - Meredith Monk (2:15) - FR T09 19 000 27
- 8_ The Heart Asks Pleasure First - Michael Nyman (3:54) - FR T09 19 000 26
- 9_ Das Buch der Klänge, part 2 - Hans Otte (7:25) - FR T09 19 000 28
- 10_ A Hudson Cycle - Nico Muhly (3:03) - FR T09 19 000 29
- 11_ Ramble On Cortona - Gavin Bryars (8:28) - FR T09 19 000 30
- 12_ Elf Dance - Moondog (1:36) - FR T09 19 000 31
- 13_ Struggle for Pleasure - Wim Mertens (6:18) - FR T09 19 000 32
- 14_ Balta ainava - Peteris Vasks (9:10) - FR T09 19 000 33

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come across familiar figures like Philip Glass, and rediscover Michael Nyman's *The Heart Asks Pleasure First*, as Wagner's fingers transfigure the cult piece, rendering it with delicate sensuality.

At the origin of the source, German composer Han Otte plays entrancing magic tricks with the fluids that spring henceforth; on the horizon, the inescapable Meredith Monk draws us into his hypnotic circles; elsewhere, Bryce Dessner is takes us on an odyssey; a dream filled with characters who guide us to boundless territories, and William Susman breaks down boundaries under the harmonic mists and mute rhythms of *Quiet Rhythms*.

At the end of our travels, we find a blank canvas of quiet nature, a clearing in which Latvian composer Peteris Vasks invites us to listen to the suspended silences.

When the album is over, the spirit of **Inland** continues to stir inside the listener's mind, in hazy reverie, clouds of nostalgia emanate from Vanessa Wagner's piano.

About Vanessa Wagner:

Described by the newspaper Le Monde as "the most exquisitely singular pianist of her generation," Vanessa Wagner is pursuing a career that echoes her original and passionate personality, combining the classical repertoire with contemporary creations, chamber music and the playing of ancient pianos, as well as innovative projects combining art music with video, electronic music and dance.

Born in Rennes, Brittany, she began playing the piano at the age of 7. She was awarded First Prize at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris at the age of 17. In 1999, she received the "instrumental solo revelation" **Victoire de la Musique** (the French equivalent of the Grammy Awards) for Classical Music. Since then, she has performed all over the world, and her wide-ranging and award-winning discography reflects a vast repertoire and a keen personality, touching on Rameau, Haydn, Schumann, Schubert, Debussy, Ravel, and contemporary music. The great French composer Pascal Dusapin has dedicated several works to her, which she developed.

At the end of 2018, Vanessa Wagner released a new opus that combined Liszt's highly spiritual "Poetic and Religious Harmonies" with Arvo Pärt's mystical work.

Wagner is also a regular guest of major venues and festivals, and is also a favourite of conductors such as Charles Dutoit, Michel Plasson and François-Xavier Roth.

Her first performance as a guest of InFiné's Workshops was at the Carrière du Normandoux, alongside Mexican producer Murcof, in 2010. Six years later, the Murcof-Wagner duo released **Statea**, an album of interpretations of the minimalist repertoire combining piano and electronic textures, giving rise to numerous international concerts, from the Barbican and Kings Place in London, to the Jazzhouse in Copenhagen and the Philharmonie de Paris. Mary Anne Hobbs will be the first to share some piano-only versions of *Statea* on BBC 6.

Inland was recorded over the course of an artist's residence at the **Théâtre Auditorium** in Poitiers, who has also hosted Vanessa Wagner several times in concert.

The album's release is scheduled for April 26, 2019.