

Aske Zidore

Lark Animations



Bettina Marie Ezaki

Aske Zidore (b. 1984)

## Lark Animations

Bettina Marie Ezaki, violin

### Lark Animations (2023)

*for solo violin*

1	Motion A, No. 1 Imitationer	2:56
2	Motion A, No. 2 Flugtkald	1:46
3	Motion A, No. 3 Sangflugt	4:31
4	Motion A, No. 4 Den vemodige sang	4:13
5	Motion B, No. 1 Forårsbebuder	1:58
6	Motion B, No. 2 Redelighed	4:45
7	Motion B, No. 3 Det åbne land	1:51
8	Motion B, No. 4 Let på strå	1:54
9	Motion B, No. 5 Imitationer	2:20

World premiere recording

Total 26:18





Aske Zidore

# An Ecology of Connectedness, From Memory to Song

By Tim Rutherford-Johnson

Skylarks hold a particular place in the British postwar imagination: the author Richard King finds connections between the birds and the horrors of war in the novels of both Siegfried Sassoon and Virginia Woolf. For the English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), the skylark symbolized hope and recovery. In attempting to process his experience of the atrocities of the First World War, he composed *The Lark Ascending* for violin and string orchestra (1914). Such works join in using the bird's unmistakable *chirrup, tirra-lira* song, its rising, soaring flight, and its literal bird's-eye view of the changing landscape to meditate on questions of destruction and restoration.

Aske Zidore's *Lark Animations* (2023) comes from a different time and a different relationship to nature; his construction of the lark – while it shares some superficial similarities with Vaughan Williams (both feature rising pentatonic arpeggios, for example) – is therefore different too. Where Vaughan Williams' bird is a heaven-bound quasi-religious spirit, Zidore's is pinpricks of location and diving swoops into the grass: an articulation of space and entanglement. Zidore's work seeks to explore relations between wild nature and modern society, connoting contemporary ideas of relationality, memory, and translation.

These ideas are embedded in the music's conception and notation. *Lark Animations* is written in twelve sections,

each on a single sheet of paper. In performance these are arranged in a circle around the player, who stands in the middle, able to turn from one page to another, in any order, following 'portals' indicated on the score. The exploration of space and openness continues on the sheets themselves, which outline, like flowcharts, various paths between and among different kinds of material: notated fragments of birdsong-like music, from single notes to long passages of elaborate figuration; slower, pastoral evocations; and graphics representing the flights of larks and sonograms of their song. This variety of material allows the performer to imitate and interpret the birds on multiple levels.

This fragmentary, distributed form of representation is closer to our experience of larks in the wild – or our recollection of them at home or in the concert hall. Walk on an English or Danish hillside in spring and there will be larks in the air above and around you (they are common birds in both countries), as well as zipping through the undergrowth. Zidore has drawn on memories of larks from his 'childhood's spiritual landscape', evoking the bird's movement patterns as well as its song.

Larks tend to be already up when you encounter them, hovering in place ('filling the sky with [their] aural graffiti', in the words of the poet and ornithologist John Bevis). Several of them at once is like a multichannel array of tiny speakers, suspended from the sky. Their song cuts unmistakably through the air and snares the ear, but the birds themselves are only seen after some effort, as flickering dots high above one's head. To stand among larks is to have one's perceptions, one's sense of self and body, stretched across a three-dimensional matrix; to join with this scattered network of sounds.

Zidore incorporates this embodied side of our encounter with larks in the movements of the violinist. For one thing, she must navigate the score spatially, moving from fragment to fragment, from sheet to sheet, across and around the circle of pages. The leap from one page to another, the composer suggests, is like the flight of the bird, diving into the grass only to emerge somewhere else. A similar sense of non-linearity arises from the switches between fragments – which can differ abruptly in style from Baroque figuration to minimalist repetition to abstract noise. And then there are the movements of her arm and bow which, in all those fast cross-string passages, mimic the flapping of a bird's wing, leading the performer to almost transform into the bird itself.

In an age of climate breakdown and extractive relations across the globe increasingly being laid bare, Zidore's translations of the bird's song and behaviour into sound, space, and movement, offers a way to think about ecologies of connectedness. Here the natural world is not something to be separated from humans, to be viewed from afar or used as resource, but something we are intimately and inextricably part of. Just as the lark is entangled with the sky and the grass, so are we entangled with it.



Bettina Marie Ezaki

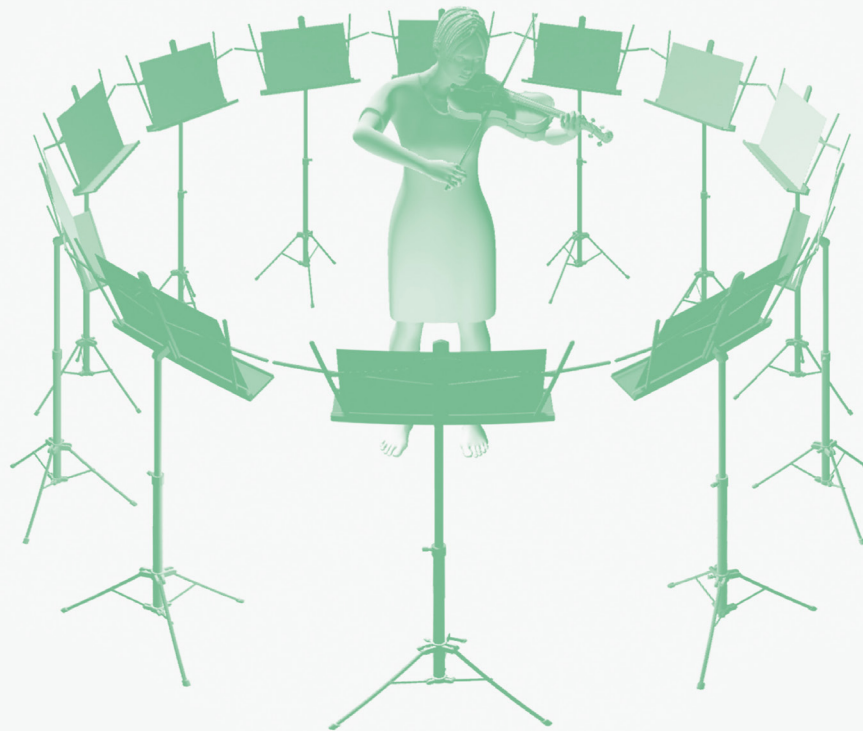
**Bettina Marie Ezaki** (b. 1988) is a Copenhagen-based violinist. In 2014, she graduated with an MA from the Royal Danish Academy of Music in violin performance under the class of Alexandre Zapolski.

Ezaki began playing the violin at age 6 and has received formal training in solo playing and chamber music by many great violinists and pedagogues in Denmark and the US. Since finishing her formal studies, Ezaki has been on a journey of her own, finding her own voice in music-making. Her interest lies in the fields of contemporary and improvisatory music. Ezaki is a true chamber musician, meaning that music is a means for collaborative expression and a feeling of togetherness.

Ezaki is a founding member of the contemporary string quartet Halvcirkel and is also a part of the string collective LiveStrings. Primarily, her work is freelance-based and also includes orchestral playing, mainly in Copenhagen Phil. She plays on a modern violin, built by luthier Julia Van der Waerden in 2014.

**Aske Zidore** (b. 1984) is a Danish artist, composer, and game designer. In his interdisciplinary practice, he uses modern notions of nature as a canvas for storytelling and critique. Zidore brings these complexities close to daily life by creating simplified and playful realms, through sound, image and game logic inspired composing, to examine the representations and symbols that shape a shared reality.

Game mechanics are central to Zidore's practice, utilised as a way to map fragments of feelings and memories that transcend normalized boundaries of space, body and time. His creations span over works for choir and instruments, as well as installations, games, prints, and 3D animations, all unfolding within non-linear structures guided by intelligent systems and rulebooks.



*Lark Animations* is an exploration of the songbird's existence through a commemorative study, drawing inspiration from its movement patterns and heralding calls of spring. The player is surrounded by twelve sheets of music, forming an organic open-world system that animates the gestures of the body, the movements of the bow, and the resonance of the violin, echoing a singing lark soaring through the skies.



## Forbundethedens økologi – fra minder til sang

Af Tim Rutherford-Johnson

I britisk efterkrigskultur er sanglærken kommet til at spille en helt særlig rolle – forfatteren Richard King finder således koblinger mellem fuglen og krigens rædsler i både Siegfried Sassoons og Virginia Woolfs romaner. For den engelske komponist Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) symboliserede lærken håb og heling. I et forsøg på at bearbejde sin oplevelse af Første Verdenskrigs rædsler komponerede han *The Lark Ascending* for violin og strygere i 1914. Sådanne værker er fælles om at udnytte fuglens umiskendelige tjirrup, tirra-lira-sang, dens opadstigende flugt højt til vejrs og dens helt konkrete fugleperspektiv på landskabets forandringer til at fundere over spørgsmål om ødelæggelse og genopbygning.

Aske Zidores *Lark Animations* (2023) er fra en anden tid med et andet forhold til naturen, så selv om hans lærke har visse overfladiske ligheder med Vaughan Williams (i begge tilfælde møder man for eksempel opadgående pentatone arpeggioer), er den også ganske anderledes konstrueret. Hvor Vaughan Williams' fugl er en himmelstræbende og næsten religiøs ånd, er Zidores små prikker af placering og styrtdyk ned mod græsset en måde at artikulere rum og sammenhænge på. I sit værk forsøger Zidore at udforske forholdet mellem den uberørte natur og det moderne samfund og at antyde nutidige forestillinger om forbundethed, minder og formidling.

Disse forestillinger er allerede indlejret i musikkens konstruktion og notation. *Lark Animations* er inddelt i tolv sektioner på hver sit nodeark. Under en opførelse er arkene placeret i en cirkel rundt om solisten, der befinder sig i midten med mulighed for at vende sig fra det ene ark til det andet i vilkårlig rækkefølge, om end i overensstemmelse med i noderne angivne ”portaler”. Udforskningen af rum og åbenhed fortsætter på selve arkene, der ligesom rutediagrammer angiver forskellige stier mellem og blandt forskellige typer materiale – noterede fragmenter af fuglesangslignende musik spændende fra enkelttoner til lange passager af delikate figurationer, langsomme og mere pastorale stemningsbilleder samt grafik til at symbolisere lærkernes flugt og stemmeaftryk af deres sang. Det alsidige materiale gør det muligt for den optrædende at imitere og fortolke fuglene på mange forskellige niveauer.

Den fragmenterede og spredte gengivelse er tættere på vores nutidige oplevelse af lærker i naturen – eller vores minder om dem derhjemme eller i koncertsalen. Hvis man går ud på en engelsk eller dansk bakketop om foråret, vil der flyve lærker ovenover og rundt omkring (de er udbredte i begge lande), når de ikke smutter rundt inde i krattet. Zidore har trukket på minder om lærker fra sin ”barndoms åndelige landskab” og fremmanet både fuglens bevægelsesmønstre og dens sang. Når man møder lærker, synes de allerede at være oppe at svæve (”fylde himlen med lydlig graffiti”, som digteren og ornitologen John Bevis har udtrykt det). Mange af dem på samme tid kan ligne en flerkannelsoplevelse af bittesmå højttalere, der hænger ned fra himlen. Sangen skærer umiskendeligt gennem luften og indfanger øret, men fuglene selv kræver det en vis indsats at få øje på som lynhurtige

prikker højt oppe over én. At stå midt mellem lærker er at få sine sanser, sin oplevelse af jeget og kroppen, strakt ud i en tredimensionel matrix og selv blive en del af dette spredte netværk af lyde.

Denne fysiske side af vores møde med lærker har Zidore indarbejdet i violinistens bevægelser. For det første skal vedkommende bevæge sig ud i rummet fra fragment til fragment, fra nodeark til nodeark, på tværs af og rundt i cirklen af ark. At springe fra det ene ark til det næste kan ifølge komponisten minde om fuglens flugt, når den dykker ned i græsset og dukker op et helt andet sted. En tilsvarende fornemmelse af noget ikkelineært opstår der mellem fragmenterne indbyrdes – for de kan veksle brat mellem barokornamentik, minimalistiske gentagelser og abstrakt støj. Dertil kommer violinistens bevægelser med arm og bue, der i alle de hurtige tværgående passager efterligner fuglens flaprende vinger og får den udøvende til nærmest selv at forvandle sig til en fugl.

I en tid med klimakrise og øget fokus på udbytende og udpinende sammenhænge overalt på kloden præsenterer Zidores videreformidling af fuglens sang og adfærd til lyd, rum og bevægelse en mulighed for at overveje forbundethedens økologi på. Her er naturen ikke kun noget adskilt fra mennesket, der ses på afstand eller udnyttes som ressource, men noget som vi er en intim og ubrydelig del af. Nøjagtig ligesom lærken er forbundet med himlen og græsset, er vi også forbundet med den.

**Bettina Marie Ezaki** (f. 1988) er en københavnsk baseret violinist. Hun dimitterede i 2014 med en kandidatgrad i violin fra Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium efter at have studeret i Alexandre Zapolskis klasse.

Bettina Marie Ezaki begyndte at spille violin som 6-årig og har modtaget formel træning i soloviolinspil og kammermusik af mange anerkendte violinister og pædagoger i Danmark og USA. Siden hun afsluttede sine formelle studier, har hun været på en rejse for at finde sin egen stemme inden for musikudøvelsen. Hendes interesse ligger inden for nutidsmusik og improvisationsmusik. Særligt i kammermusikken, hvor musikken for hende bliver et middel til kollaborativ udtrykkelse og en følelse af samhørighed.

Bettina Marie Ezaki er medstifter af strygekvartetten Halvcirkel og er også en del af strygerkollektivet LiveStrings. Hovedparten af hendes arbejde er freelance-baseret, men hun spiller også i orkestre, primært Copenhagen Phil. Hun spiller på en moderne violin bygget af Julia Van der Waerden i 2014.

**Aske Zidore** (f. 1984) er en dansk kunstner, komponist og game designer. I sin tværfaglige praksis bruger han moderne naturforestillinger som lærred for historiefortælling og kritik. Han bringer disse kompleksiteter tæt på hverdagslivet ved at skabe forenkede og legende verdener gennem komposition inspireret af lyd, billede og gamelogik for at undersøge de repræsentationer og symboler, der former en fælles virkelighed.

Spilmekanikker er centrale i Aske Zidores praksis og bliver anvendt som en måde at kortlægge fragmenter af følelser og erindringer, der transcenderer konventionelle grænser for rum, krop og tid. Hans værker spænder fra kompositioner for kor og instrumenter til installationer, spil, tryk og 3D-animationer – alle udfoldet i ikke-lineære strukturer ledt af intelligente systemer og regelsæt.

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*An Ecology of Connectedness, From Memory to Song,*  
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by Jakob Levinsen

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