

The trio of flute, clarinet and guitar is not quite the usual ensemble one might come across in a chamber music setting and therefore there is not so much repertoire written for it. When the guitarist Markku Laakso inquired about my interest in composing for this ensemble, I was immediately excited. I strive with great interest and curiosity for anything special, new and perhaps a bit strange – which I consider a prerequisite for maintaining all creative activity. The sonic possibilities of this trio are really versatile, so I wanted to take up the challenge.

In music, I have always been fascinated by its ability to influence our experiences of time and surroundings around us. While listening to music or performing it myself, I have plunged into countless trips outside of the current situation and surroundings around me. For years, my compositional interest has focused on exploring and blurring the experiences of time and place, and I decided to continue along the same path with this trio.

In my opinion, however, composing always requires some external stimulus, a reason for the music to become present. For me, these reasons come mainly from connections outside music itself, and nature in particular has for long played an ever-increasing role as a source of ideas for me. This was the case with composing *Voyage* as well.

The first sketches I did during the summer of 2018 were heavily influenced further by my honeymoon trip to California and Nevada in October 2018. In the midst of all the hurry of our current rhythm of life, my wife and I managed to completely detach from our everyday life and enjoy each other's company in the pulse of the big cities and in the intoxicating peace of the nature. The vastness and endlessness of the Pacific Ocean, the wilderness in the sunburn deserts, the canyon areas and the Sierra Nevada Mountains made an everlasting impression to me.

Although I have many times experienced similar feelings while being in the nature, perhaps a little clichéd statement for feeling very small hit me very strongly in the Giant forest of the Sequoia National Park in California. That rather small area of around 1880 acres is the home to five of the world's ten largest trees. The area's famous giants, the Giant sequoias, are among the oldest surviving trees on this planet. While walking among and standing at the foot of these trees, which reach up to the heights of a 14-story building, time disappeared. I felt as if these old giants were peacefully watching us in their sanctuary almost two kilometers above the sea level. The experience was overwhelming. These giants have survived many ordeals during their lives spanning over 3000 years, and they may well continue to live for another 1000 years, if we people allow them to do so.

As a result of these experiences and thoughts, my trio became a *Voyage*, even though it is not really a travel diary. I would like to warmly thank Markku Laakso for the commission and the Teosto Commission Fund and the North Savo Fund of the Finnish Cultural Foundation for supporting the commission. *Voyage* is dedicated to its commissioner and performers in the premiere: flutist Hanna Juutilainen, clarinetist Asko Heiskanen and guitarist Markku Laakso.

– Markku Klami, work commentary for the premiere performance, February 2019