


The intense work of bringing this album into the world would not have been possible without the loving help of my wife Qait and the grace of my Father in Heaven. I express gratitude to my professors at Brigham Young University and Arizona State University who consulted with me on many aspects of the project and composition before and after the expedition to Russia. Special thanks is owed to Natalia Mihailova, who helped me secure a visa invitation to Russia on behalf of the Kizhi Museum-Preserve. In addition to the many others at the Kizhi Museum who lent a hand, I thank the other organizations who supported my expedition through access, collaboration and goodwill: the Ministry of Culture of Karelia (esp. Anna Tomchik), the Glazunov State Conservatory (esp. Anna Efimova and Alexander Beloborodov), and the sound archive at the Institute of Linguistics, Literature and History - Karelian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (esp. Professor Konkka). Those who shared their talents with my recorder deserve special gratitude: Finnish singer Karoliina Kantelinen, bell ringers Igor Hulter, Igor Arhipov, Sergei and Natalya, kantele players Denis Kozlov & Elena Magnitskaya, the musicians and singers of the Folkloric Ethnographic Theater of Kizhi, the male vocal ensemble of the Kizhi Pogost, the ensemble Kantele, the ensemble Toive, the trio Asketics, and the folk-band Saltuma. I also thank the kind hosts of the "Strange Place" Cafe in Petrozavodsk, who fed me the most inspiring food on many occasions. Literally hundreds of people in Russia made Karelian Soundscapes possible. I wish I could thank them all by name.

Over one hundred generous backers from around the world pledged their own hard-earned money on Kickstarter.com to help me make this album. I dedicate Karelian Soundscapes to all my backers and to the people of Karelia: it was only together that we could bring this music into the world! Kickstarter backers, thank you for your munificence, confidence, and patience:

Aiyana S | AJ Wilcox | Alex S | Allen Blake Boatright & Miriam Hawkes Boatright | Andrew Alder | Andrew C H White | Andrew Foxx | Andrew Jun Okabe | Bjørn Reinhart Mertinat Kolstad | Brian & Carolina Wahlquist | Cassandra Marketos | Cathy Powell | Charles Adler | Christin Light | Clayton Wahlquist | Colby & Shauna Pearson | Colleen Wahlquist | Corbin Sterling | Curtis N Smith | Dale Sturm | Daniel H | David & Amber Fuller | Dean Hansen | Drinda Hansen | EJ Christensen | Emily Bowers | Eric & Abby Hanson | Esther Megargel | Ezra Li Eismont | Graham Howieson | Greg Palmer | Howard Spackman | Ian Anderson | Ian Rochford | ILYA | Ilya Kazharsky | Isaac Boatright | Ivan & Rachel Hinkle | Jamie Gump | Janene Marcum | Jeff Riegle | Joanne S | Joseph Sowa | JS | Justin K Rising | K Carlton | Katherine Adams | Kathy Flynn | Katie Brooks | Newel Kimball | Kimberly Daley | Kimberly Miller | Kit Strait | Konstantin Petrukhin | Kristen Taylor Williams | Kristi Lingwall | Kristin Wahlquist | Lee A Wahlquist | Lisa Wahlquist Nielsen | Liz & Pat Davis | Marcy Jackson | Mark J Zabriskie | Matthew & Denise Alexander | Melanie Hoffmann | Melissa Hall | Melody Spackman Hardy | Michael & Jessica Berger | Michael & Erin Monsivais | Michael McGregor | Mindy Davis | Natalie Jensen | Nathan Plowman | Niina Pollari | Paul Coombs | Paul Scott | Rachel Scott | Rae D | Rita Jardt | Robert E Chambers | Robert & Michelle Wahlquist Family | Roman Bezrukov | Roman Palaznik | Romka | Ross Baron | Ruth Wahlquist | Ryan Spackman | Sam W | SJ Christensen | Scott Family | Scott Higginson | Shaun Scrivner | Shelley Johnson | Spencer Wolverton | Tanya Hatch | Tay Gudmundson | Teri Draper | The THZ | Tisha Flora | Todd D Kitchen | Tom & Amy Torgersen | Tyler & Stacy Jensen & Family | Vladimir Boyko Kuznetsov | Wendi Ballard | Zachary Van Houten



KARELIAN SOUNDSCAPES BY MICHAEL WAHLQUIST



KARELIAN SOUNDSCAPES R. MICHAEL WAHLQUIST

1 - RING, LAKES, AND SING, TAIGAL (9:26)

"Ring, lakes, and sing taigal!" This line from the Anthem of the Republic of Karelia inspired me to create a kaleidoscopic overture to the album: a sonic forest or lake from samples of Karelian music. Opening with the first recording of the expedition (a local singing the quasi-folk song "Petroskoi," about Petrozavodsk), and an orchestral tune-up, thereafter follows a swirl of folk music from ensembles Toive, Sattuma and Kantele, the folkloric ethnographic theater of Kizhi, and various other local musicians. The closing section processes a recording of a violinist busking in downtown Petrozavodsk.

2 - BUDGET BELLS (2:25)

Members of the Petrozavodsk-based trio Asketics helped me sample various resonant objects - gears, cogs and other thingamabobs - collected from around their rehearsal space in an abandoned tractor factory in Petrozavodsk. "It's budget bells!" one of them remarked. I mapped these samples to my computer keyboard and created a multilayer improvisation imitating the Karelian style of church bell ringing.

3 - THE CITY RESONANT (5:22)

A personal sonic travelogue through Petrozavodsk. The rain-like music is a free blend of ambient city sounds (birds, bicycles) and improvisations I recorded on anything I could find that made a sound when struck. Several sculptures along the boardwalk seemed especially made for this, but sometimes the most ordinary of objects yielded the most fascinating sounds - flagpoles, fences, etc.

4 - GATES OF YOUTH (7:01)

One afternoon I was recording near the "Youth" stadium in Petrozavodsk. A boy called out after his father and ran through a gate, which let out a rusty groan. I walked up to the gate and began improvising with the marvelous sounds the gate rendered when swung in different ways. For twenty minutes I improvised on four different gates, and then mixed the four improvisations into a quartet. Ambient sounds of local ball games can also be heard in the final section.

5 - KAROLIINA'S SONG (4:48)

One of the highlights of my trip was a chance meeting with Finnish singer Karoliina Kantelinen. She's a virtuoso expert in Karelian folk music, especially in an improvisatory style called "yoik." Her song "Soittelen soutusalmen suorimaista" was one of the first examples of Karelian music that I discovered when I began research over a year before my expedition. Karoliina was kind enough to grant me permission to sample this recording to create my own 'remix.' From the soaring high of the opening to the rapid, animated patter of the ending, Karoliina's voice is transformed into an ethereal chorus of vocal and electronic pyrotechnics.

6 - VOICES OF THE MOTHERS (4:22)

Thanks to the researchers at the Karelian branch of the Russian Academy of Science's Institute of Linguistics, Literature and History, I was able to obtain archival recordings of Karelian vocal folk music dating back to the 1960s. I cap a prismatic survey of this archive with a performance I recorded of the folkloric ethnographic theater of Kizhi.

7 - THE TOLLING BENEATH THE WAVES (7:26)

During Soviet times, church bells were silenced. In order to save the bells from being stolen, melted down, or used for target practice, many were hidden in lakes and rivers, some never to be recovered. In order to evoke the underwater tolling of these lost bells, I used an electronic process called convolution to blend the sounds of six different sets of bells which I recorded on the expedition at local churches and festivals.

8 - KANTELE AND THE BELLS (3:00)

One of the amazing stories I learned during the expedition was how the kantele (a Finnish variety of harp) taught the bells to ring again. The distinct sound of the orthodox bells in Karelia inspired a style of kantele songs imitating the bells. In the late 1980s, Igor Hutter and others turned to these kantele tunes to rediscover the nearly lost art of ringing the bells in Karelia. My aim here was to digitally morph a kantele improvisation (by Elena Magnitskaya of Petrozavodsk) into a bell one (by Igor Hutter at the Church of the Archangel Michael).

9 - WHITE NIGHT CHORUS (3:08)

Summer's white nights in the Russian north mean that the sun hardly sets. The middle of the night is as bright as pre-dawn. An unexpected result is that birds sing their dawn chorus through the night. This track is a selection of a recording taken near the Neglinskaya river in Petrozavodsk, May 31st, 2013, after one o'clock in the morning.

10 - VOICES OF THE FATHERS (8:26)

The male vocal ensemble of Kizhi graciously allowed me to record their rendition of "Come let us worship" by an anonymous Russian composer. Layering the recording together with 25 digitally stretched versions of itself, I carefully crafted and molded a bell-like structure. The result is a dense but consonant texture punctuated by strange bird-like sounds - the syllabants rendered into musical gestures through the extreme stretching. These 'echoed' versions line up with the 'live' performance at the climax of the original choral composition - on the words 'Son of God, risen from the dead.' In the subsequent 'alleluia's' the stretched and modified versions again peel off into echo after echo.

11 - ISLAND ANCHORED IN THE FLOW OF TIME (10:48)

During my time on Kizhi island I was moved by the efforts of all the personnel in the various departments of the Kizhi Museum Preserve. They are a diligent crew who has taken up the task of anchoring a ship against the flow - the flow of time. There's a certain beauty to the fact that it takes modern science, innovative technology and meticulous research to restore the wooden churches, protect the fragile ecosystem of the bay-sheltered island, and capture for posterity a taste of the culture of a bygone era. Kizhi is not just a tourist trap, a kitschy pastiche of Karelia - in many ways Kizhi is the heart of Karelia. In this track, recorded samples of the main belfry of the Kizhi Pogost are used as a slow "blagoves" ringing to intercut various soundscape episodes from Kizhi, including bird songs, a cowbell, a small swarm of butterflies with white and black 'coloring-book' wings, dew dropping, boats passing, men working on a wooden church, a storm, waves and a performance by Igor Hutter, recorded at a distance, on the bells of the Church of the Archangel Michael.

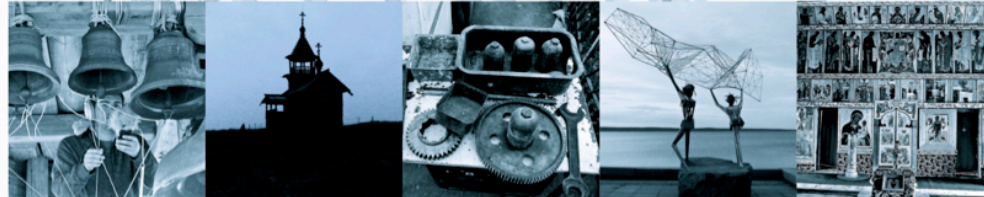
12 - ARCHANGEL HALATIONS (3:11)

Igor Hutter and Igor Arhipov have been the driving force behind the revitalization of Karelian church bell ringing since the 1980s. The complex rhythmic patterns of a performance are all the more impressive since the bells are typically rung by a single musician using various home-crafted rope rigging. In this track I've created an electronic 'halo' of effects around a particularly virtuoso improvisation by Igor Hutter on the bells of the Church of the Archangel Michael, on Kizhi island. A special hallmark of his style is a metric modulation from one subdivision to another while keeping the underlying pulse of the largest bell. Hutter personally selected the bells for the church, combining some restored from pre-Soviet days and others of more recent manufacture.

13 - ONEGA CALLING (6:00)

"Careful, the doors are closing. Next stop, Ladozhskaya." Riding the Metro in St. Petersburg, a train from the Ladoga rail station, and by bus, boat, and helicopter (an Mi-8 in this case). I traveled to and around Karelia. As much as anything I recorded during my expedition, these travel sounds define Karelia's soundscape. It's a journey worth making to hear at its end the musical waves of Lake Onega.

(Total 75:43) All sounds recorded on a Sony PCM-D50 in the Republic of Karelia May-June 2013, except on tracks 5 & 6 used by permission as noted above. Composed & mixed by R. Michael Wahlquist on a MacBook Pro using Pro Tools, Audacity & RTcmix. Mastered by Peter Costa. Album design, photography & typography by R. Michael Wahlquist.



KARELIAN
R MICHAEL WAHLQUIST
SOUNDSCAPES





KARELIAN SOUNDSCAPES is the culmination of a two-year-long musical project by composer R. Michael Wahlquist. The music on this album is created entirely of processed sound samples recorded May-June 2013 in the Republic of Karelia, Russia during an expedition supported by numerous individuals and organizations in Russia and by over one hundred backers on Kickstarter.com. With the sounds of nature and the city, found objects and church bells, folk and religious music, this ambitious collection creates an evocative and enthralling sonic portrait of Karelia.

Звоните, озёра и пою тайга! - 1 - Ring, lakes, and sing, taiga!
 Бюджетные колокола - 2 - Budget bells
 Город эумаший - 3 - the city resonant
 Ворота юности - 4 - Gates of youth
 Песня Каролины - 5 - Karolina's song

Голоса матерей - 6 - Voices of the mothers
 Звонящие под волнами - 7 - the tolling beneath the waves
 Кантеле и колокола - 8 - Kantele and the bells
 Хор белой ночи - 9 - White night chorus
 Голоса отцов - 10 - Voices of the fathers
 Остров на якорь в потоке времени - 11 - Island anchored in the flow of time
 Орелы архангела - 12 - Archangel halations
 Омега зовёт - 13 - Omega calling



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