



anna berg earthward, ever circling

2023

for string trio

duration: 12'

Commissioned by Guro Kleven Hagen, Eivind Ringstad and Amalie Stalheim
with financial support by Det norske komponistfond

anna berg: earthward, ever circling (2023)

Earthward, Ever Circling (2023) was commissioned by Guro Kleven Hagen (violin), Eivind Ringstad (viola) and Amalie Stalheim (cello), with financial support by The Norwegian Composer's Fund (Det Norske Komponistfond). The piece was composed by Anna Berg in Oslo and Paris from August 2022 to January 2023.

All performances of the piece shall be reported to performing rights organisation TONO (Norwegian collection society) either directly when performed in Norway, or indirectly through the performing rights organisation belonging to the country where the piece is being performed (Le Sacem, STIM, CODA, etc.).



anna berg: earthward, ever circling (2023)

Programnote (norsk)

"De levende trenger lys, de døde trenger musikk". Sitatet er fra et vietnamesisk buddhistisk begravelsesrituale, der ulike former for musikk benyttes for forberede den nylig avdødes sjel til reincarnasjon. Begravelsesmusikken er en viktig del av vietnamesisk kulturarv og tradisjonsrikdom som er i ferd med å forsvinne. I forarbeidet til Earthward, Ever Circling (2023), ble jeg opptatt av hvordan begravelsesmusikken i denne tradisjonen blir brukt som kommunikasjonsmiddel mellom levende og døde, mellom nåtiden og evigheten. I stykket kommer dette til syn ved at tonene og frasene beveger seg gjennom ulike register; de strekker seg ned mot det jordlige, og opp mot det guddommelige og evige. Hele tiden veksles det mellom disse stadiene. Lik sjelens mulige bevegelser til sitt neste liv, har bevegelsene i musikken ulik hastighet og tyngde, noe svirrer mer hektisk og sjelvende, mens annet er mer statisk, avventende.

Det var flere av vestens tenkere og forfattere som hengav seg til ideen om reincarnasjon, deriblant Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). I hans dikt "Gesang der Geister über den Wassern", skriver han om hvordan menneskets sjel likner vann; kommer fra himmelen, til himmelen stiger den, og igjen returnerer det til jorden, i en evig, alternerende bevegelse. Jeg fant en engelsk oversettelse av diktet gjort av den amerikanske forfatteren Adam Sedia (f. 1984), der siste del av strofen lyder "earthward, ever circling", som er bakgrunnen for tittelen.

anna berg: earthward, ever circling (2023)

Program note (English)

"The living need light, the dead need music". The quote is from a Vietnamese Buddhist funeral ritual, where different forms of music are used to prepare the soul of the newly deceased for reincarnation. Funeral music is an important part of Vietnamese cultural heritage and tradition, that along with many rites across the world is about to disappear. The string trio Earthward, Ever Circling (2023) is the first piece in a series where I'm interested in how funeral music is used as a means of communication between living and dead, between the present and eternity. In the piece, this is reflected in the way the phrases move through different registers. They reach down towards the earthly and up towards the divine and eternal. The music constantly alternates between these stages. Like the soul's possible movements to its next life, the different elements in the music have different speed and weight, some parts swirling more hectically, while others parts are more static, waiting.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) is one of the Western thinkers who embraced the idea of reincarnation. In his poem "Gesang der Geister über den Wassern", he writes about how the human soul resembles water; coming from heaven, to heaven it rises, and again it returns to earth, in an eternal, alternating movement. I discovered an English translation of the poem done by the American writer Adam Sedia (b. 1984), where the last verse reads "earthward, ever circling", which is the background for the title of this piece.

for string trio

earthward, ever circling

anna berg

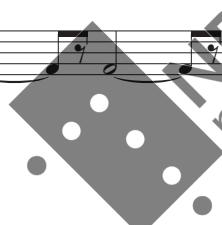
$\text{♩} = 68$

violin sul tasto flautando
p — *mp* *mf* \geq *p*
viola flautando sim.
mp $\geq p$ *mf* $\geq p$ *p*
cello flautando sim.
p — *mp* $\geq p$ *mf* $\geq p$ *p*

vln. *mf* *p* *p* *mp* $\geq p$ *p*
vla. *mf* *p* *p* *p* — *mf* *p*
vc. *mf* *p* *p* *p* — *mf* $\geq p$

6 *8va* —
vln. *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*
vla. *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*
vc. *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

10 *p* *f* *mp*
vln. *p* *f* *mp* *f* *mp*
vla. *p* *f* *mp* *f* *mp*
vc. *p* *f* *mp*



This music is copyright protected

*) all tremolos should be played flautando,
light, slow a la punta throughout the whole piece

earthward, ever circling

14

vln.

vla.

vc.

20

vln.

p

flautando
6

vla.

p

mp

ord. flautando
3

ord.

vc.

p

flautando

pp

mp

earthward, ever circling

ord. flautando

vln. *p*

vla. *p* *pp*

vc. *mp*

ord.

vln. *(mp)*

vla. *pp*

vc. *mp*

ord.

flautando ord.

vln. *f*

vla. *f*

vc. *mp*

flautando *p* *mp*

ord.

vln. *mp*

vla. *p*

vc. *flautando* *3*

f *mp*

31

vln. *p*

vla. *p*

ord.

vc. *p* *p* *mp*

earthward, ever circling

36

vln. (p)

vla. (mp) p

vc. (mp) p

This music is copyright protected
NB noter

40

vln. — p

vla. mp — p pp

vc. — mp

This music is copyright protected
NB noter

45

vln. — p mp p pp

vla. — 4 —

vc. > — 4 —

This music is copyright protected
NB noter

earthward, ever circling

50

vln.

vla.

vc.

8va

p

mf

p

mp

p

mf

p

mp

p

mf

p

mp

p

57 flautando 3 ord.

vln. 

vla. 

vc. 

NB noter

This music is copyright protected

f 3 *mp* 3 *flautando* 6 *mp*

60

vln. (♩ = ♩) (♩ = ♩) flautando 3

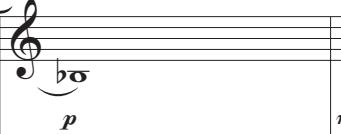
vla. flautando ord. 3

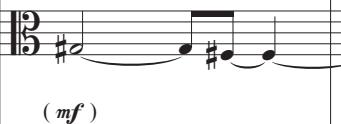
vc. ord.

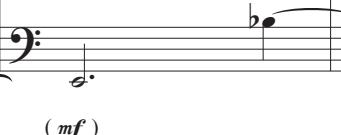
earthward, ever circling

64

ord.

vln. 

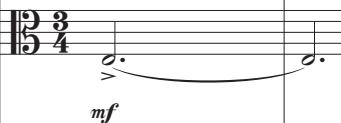
vla. 

vc. 

3/4 time signature.

69

vln. 

vla. 

vc. 

3/4 time signature.

NB
noter
This music is copyright protected

75

vln. 

vla. 

vc. 

4/4 time signature.

earthward, ever circling

81

vln. (mp) *f*

vla. *mp*

vc. *mf*

vln. *mf*

vla. flautando ord.

vc. *p*

85

vln. flautando *p*

vla. -

vc. *p*

vln. ord. *mp*

vla. *mp*

vc. *mp*

vln. *pp*

vla. *p*

vc. *mp*

89

vln. *p*

vla. *mf*

vc. *p*

earthward, ever circling

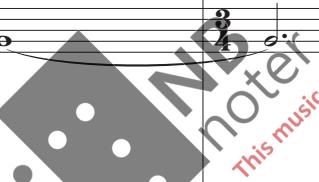
vln. vla. vc.

101

vln.

vla.

vc.

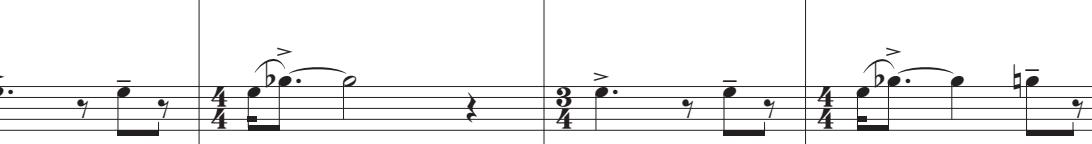


mp

p

107

vln. 

vla. 

vc. 

earthward, ever circling

111

vln.

vla.

vc.

accel. - - - - -

116

vln.

vla.

vc.

*NB notes
This music is copyright protected*

122

vln.

vla.

vc.

earthward, ever circling

125

vln. flautando
(mf) p mp p

vla. flautando
(mf) p mp p

vc. flautando
(mf) p mp



129

vln. mp p mf p

vla. 5 4 p 6 mf p

vc. 5 4 p 3 4



132

vln. (♩=♩) (♩=♩) flautando
ord. pp

vla. ord. flautando
pp

vc.



earthward, ever circling

137

vln. (*pp*)

vla. (*pp*)

vc. flautando *pp* *p*

rit.

141

vln. *pp*

vla. *pp* *ppp* *p*

vc. *pp* *ppp* *p* ord.

ord.

♩ = 68

144 ord.

vln. *p*

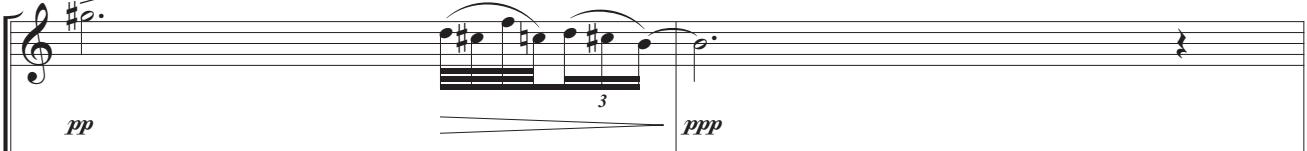
vla. ord. *p*

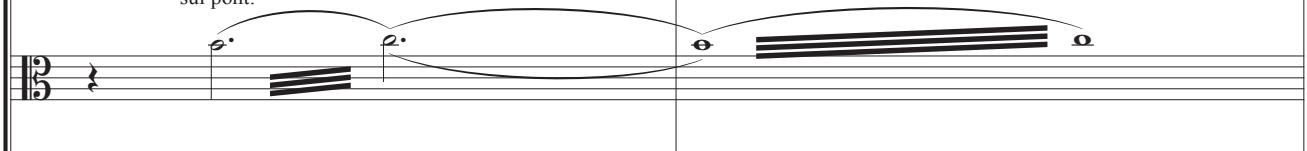
vc. *p* > *pp*

3

earthward, ever circling

149 sul pont.

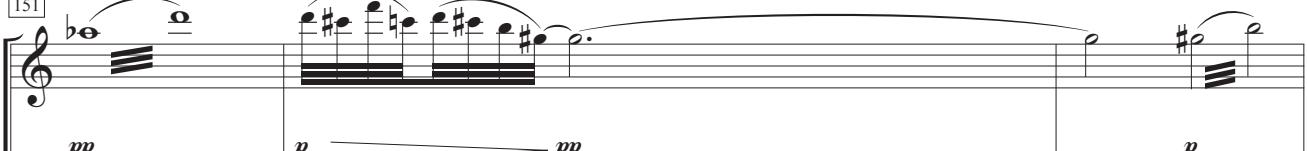
vln. 

vla. 

vc. 

pp

151

vln. 

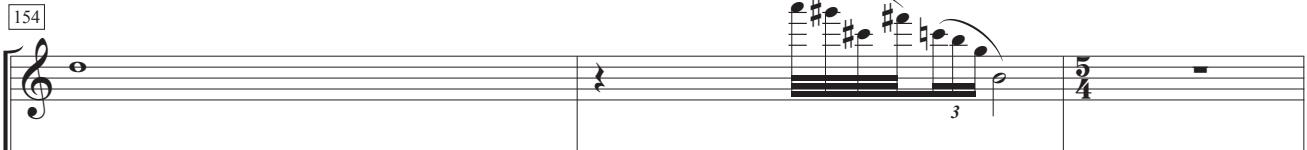
vla. 

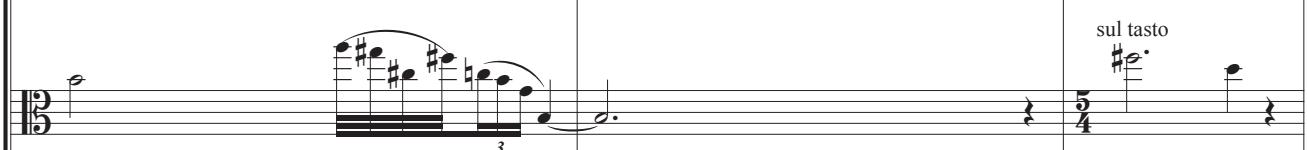
vc. 

pp

*NB
noter
This music is copyright protected*

154

vln. 

vla. 

vc. 

sul tasto

p

sul tasto

p

earthward, ever circling

sul tasto

157

vln. *p*

vla. (*p*) *mp* *p* *pp*

vc. (*p*) *mp* *p* *pp*



162

vln.

vla. ord. *mp* *f*

vc. *p*



166

vln. *mp*

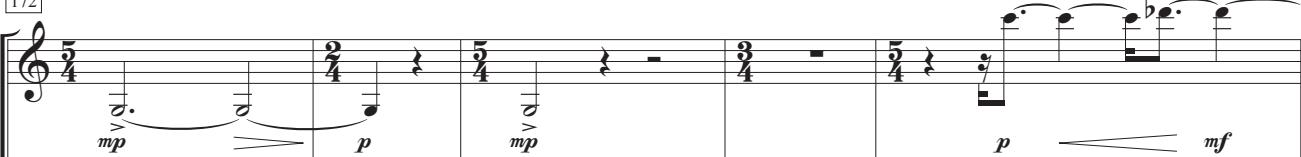
vla. *mp* *p* *p* *pp* *p*

vc. *mp* *p*

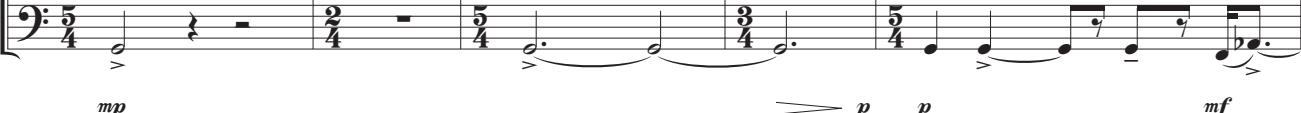


earthward, ever circling

172

vln. 

vla. 

vc. 

177

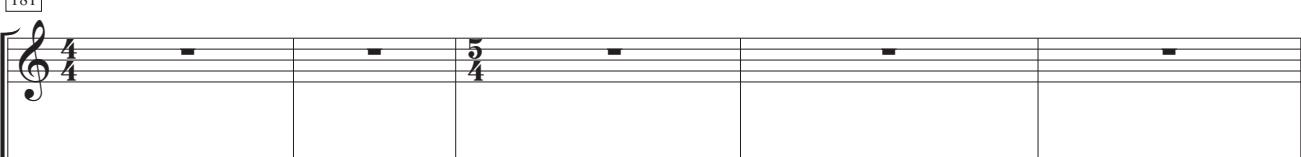
vln. 

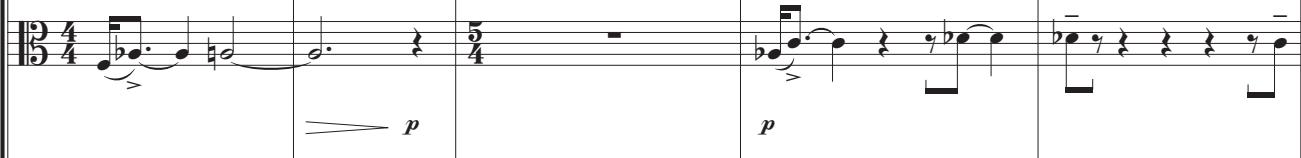
vla. 

vc. 

*NB
noter
This music is copyrighted*

181

vln. 

vla. 

vc. 

earthward, ever circling

186

vln.

vla. (p)

vc. (p)

vln. -

vla. -

vc. -

Musical score for strings (vln., vla., vc.) showing measures 198-200. The score includes dynamics (p, mp), performance instructions (ritardando), and time signature changes (4/4, 5/4). Measure 198 starts with a ritardando. Measure 199 begins with a dynamic *p*. Measure 200 begins with a dynamic *mp*.