

Sketches of Shifting Landscapes for string quartet and live electronics (2024)
by Örjan Sandred

Sketches of Shifting Landscapes brings the listener on a journey through a sequence of various scenes and settings. As I composed this piece, I began to view its structure as a series of varied landscapes. Some returned in new colors and contexts, unveiling new expressions within the familiar material. The shifting atmospheres made me draw a parallel to the changing environment we experience in the real-world of today.

With the 8 loudspeakers surrounding the concert hall, I place the audience in the middle of these landscapes. There is a close connection between the electronic part and the string instruments; occasionally the electronic part reinforces the performed structures by doubling the instruments, occasionally it listens to the string players and adjusts textures and harmony to accompany the performance. The generated sounds are built from synthesized timbres based on the sounds of the string instruments as well as characteristic sampled gestures (as for example the jeté: the gesture of the performers dropping the bow on the string). Some electronic gestures and melodies are generated by algorithms borrowed from artificial intelligence (kept on a short leash to support the musical intention), some are more traditionally composed.