Composer Thomas Kozumplik and Legendary Percussionist Jonathan Haas Team up on Massive Child of the Earth

Kozumplik's large and expressive symphony for NYU Percussion Ensemble is out May 24 on Music Starts from Silence.

Commissioned by Jonathan Haas and his New York University Percussion Ensemble, Composer/Percussionist Thomas Kozumplik's Child of the Earth is a large-scale work for percussion orchestra in four parts. The recording of the 2017 premiere at NYU will be released on May 24 on the Music Starts from Silence label.

The scale of Child of the Earth is unique in today's environment where portability is key. All within the framework of a romantic symphony, percussionists are asked to play multiple instruments and sing. The 16-member chamber orchestra mixes marimbas, vibraphones, bells, chimes, piano, xylophone, Thai gongs, timpani, drum kit, more drums, cymbals, gongs, voices, and small percussion.

Thomas Kozumplik, who's playing has been called “sublime” by Pitchfork, is a composer/
performer and co-founder of Loop 2.4.3, Music Starts From Silence, and Clogs. Gramophone called Kozumplik's song-cycle American Dreamland “an astonishing variety of brand-new yet iconic sounds that create a riveting aura” and praised its “artistic punch.”

ORIGINS
Jonathan Haas was initially interested in performing a work of Kozumplik's for percussion, keyboards, voices, and samples. Although the project didn't happen, the conversation continued, and after Jonathan attended the NYC premiere of Loop 2.4.3's Time-Machine music, a partnership was solidified. At their next meeting Haas asked Kozumplik to write a piece for percussion ensemble, and they both agreed it should be a work of grand scale, a symphony, performed by an orchestra of percussionists. This idea resonated strongly with Kozumplik, who “came of age” as a musician as part of a percussion ensemble under his mentor, Robert Hohner.

Kozumplik visited NYU regularly from January to April 2017, listening to rehearsals, and giving/receiving feedback. Kozumplik dedicated the work to his cousin, Chad Plasters, who had passed tragically that year. Chad's life, his appreciation of nature and love of his family, helped to guide the story behind the music, reflecting on the power of nature, the depth of human emotion, and the brevity and fragility of life.

NOTES FROM JONATHAN HAAS
It is rare that an epic composition like “Child of the Earth” emerges from within the percussion ensemble repertoire in our modern times of compositionally downsizing to accommodate portability. Thomas Kozumplik has captured the grandeur, expressive qualities and subtle intricacies of the percussion orchestra, heard rarely in works by celebrated composers including Charles Ives, Percy Grainger, Alberto Ginastera, Charles Wuorinen, and Gunther Schuller. For any percussion ensemble music director who is committed to bringing forward works of great importance and significance, “Child of the Earth” must be at the top of the list of exceptional and provocative works for percussion orchestra. — JH
CHILD OF THE EARTH
MUSIC STARTS FROM SILENCE

FORMAT/RELEASE DATE:
VINYL/CD/DIGITAL
MAY 24, 2019

[PRE-ORDER]

premiere performance - May 1, 2017
Steinhardt Hall, New York University,
NYC

TRACKS
1.-3. I. Mother Nature (la inocencia perdida) [10:41]
4. II. Mysticism (Carillon) [5:14]
5. III. A Journey (baile de los tambores) [4:01]
6-7. IV. Beauty and its Passing (cuando habiamos podido amar) [12:12]

CREDITS
music by Thomas Kozumplik
performed by the New York University Percussion Ensemble
directed by Jonathan Haas

NYU Percussion Ensemble:
Andrew Adams, Sara Barsky, Austin Choi, Rose Egan, John Gavin, Noah Hadland,
Hanhan Jiang, TJ Maistros, Tyler Mashek, Will Marinelli, Sean Millman, EJ Eiras Saunders,
Jared Shaw, Shannon Silver, Vivian Wang, Brandon Wong, Chen Yang, Declan Zhang, with
Aviva Jaye, James Godwin, Fred Nelson

recorded/engineered by Tom Doczi
mastered by Joe Lambert
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[ music starts from silence ]
THOMAS KOZUMPLIK
Thomas Kozumplik is a composer/performer and co-founder of Loop 2.4.3, Music Starts From Silence, and Clogs. Kozumplik strives to create music that is very personal, and yet broad reaching in its attempt to express or find meaning within the human condition. While often using traditional forms as an outline, great freedoms are taken in style and expression, using texture, rhythmic drive, tension, polyphony, and a melodic nature to serve a musical narrative.

He also works as a freelance percussionist, arranger, and clinician. Kozumplik was an original member of the Yale Percussion Group (directed by Robert van Sice), and a long-time member of the Robert Hohner Percussion Ensemble (classical, jazz, and world music), the Ron Parmentier Trio (modern and free jazz), and Uncle Jimmy’s Dirty Basement (theatrical/multi-media rock and roll). His performances have been called “dazzling throughout” (Mojo), “sublime” (Pitchfork), “smart and engaging” (New York Times), and “the hit for me” (composer Terry Riley via the New York Times). Gramophone called Kozumplik’s song-cycle American Dreamland “an astonishing variety of brand-new yet iconic sounds that create a riveting aura” and praised its “artistic punch.”

In addition to his main projects, Thomas has performed/recorded with artists ranging from Grammy-winner Dave Samuels, to MacArthur Fellows John Jesurun and Dafnis Prieto, Harry Partch scholar Dean Drummond, and indie-rock artists such as The National, Sufjan Stevens, My Brightest Diamond, and The Books. He has been featured on over 20 internationally released albums, in a variety of genres, on the Albany, Asthmatic Kitty, Beggars Banquet, Brassland, Digital Music Products (DMP), and Music Starts From Silence record labels.
Based in Brooklyn, NY, Thomas has toured throughout North America, Europe, Scandinavia, South Korea, and Australia, and has performed for radio, film, theater, and television, including features on the Learning Channel, NPR, and France Inter Radio. He has given concerts, clinics, and held residencies at such institutions as Cornell University, Ithaca College, CalArts, UC Berkeley, Michigan State University, and others. Thomas has been featured as a soloist and collaborator at the London Jazz Festival, Sydney Festival, Adelaide Festival, the Barbican (UK), Brighton Dome (UK), Bang on a Can Marathon, Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, the Kitchen, Joe's Pub (NYC), the Andy Warhol Museum (Pittsburgh), World Cafe Live (Philadelphia), and many more.

Thomas has received awards and support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Brooklyn Arts Council, the UK Arts Council, Connecticut Arts Council, Vermont Arts Council, Chamber Music America, ASCAP, Yale University, Notre Dame Jazz Festival, International Association of Jazz Educators, and individual sponsors.

THANKS. LET US KNOW IF YOU’D LIKE A PROMO.
Child of the Earth
(un niño busca a Dios)

a symphony for percussion

Thomas Kozumplik

Side A
I. Mother Nature
(la inocencia perdida)
II. Mysticism
(Carillon)

Side B
III. A Journey
(bailé de los tambores)
IV. Beauty and Its Passing
(cuando habíamos podido amar)

Dedicated to the memory of Chad Michael Plasters
A symphony for percussion orchestra inspired by and written for Jonathan Haas
and his New York University Percussion Ensemble.

World Premiere performance at
Frederick Loewe Theatre, NYU.
May 4th

NYU Percussion Ensemble,
Directed by Jonathan Haas

Performers, Andrew Altman, Sara Baniky, Austin Chol, Rose Egan, John Gavin, Noah Hadland, Hsiu Li Wu, Chen Yang, Declan Zhang, with Aviva Jaye, James Godwin, and Fred Nelson.

Recorded Engineered by Tom Doci,
Mixed/Post Production by Thomas Kozumplik at MSFS Studios, and at Anfarm with Sean Boyd
Mastered by loe Lambert

Graphic Design by Stephen GiIowski Design

Photography by Julia Reinhart

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Special thanks to Chad, Terry, and the extended Plasters family; Jonathan Haas, Sean Stier, NYU, and all of the artists named above: An•Lin Bardin, Keith and Tsing Bardin, Sean Boyd and Anfarm, Jim Burnes, Hsiu Li Wu, Chen Yang, Declan Zhang, and all who have supported this project from near and far.