



www.uymp.co.uk

# Thomas SIMAKU

(b. 1958)



*"...the elegance of Ligeti and the gritty intensity of Kurtág, a fascinating combination."*

Fanfare Magazine, USA, 2008

Albanian-born British composer Thomas Simaku (b. 1958) studied composition at the Tirana Conservatoire (1978-82) and the University of York (1991-96) where he was awarded a PhD in Composition, studying with David Blake. Winner of the coveted Lionel Robbins Memorial Scholarship in 1993 (Simaku was the only candidate in the UK to win the award that year), he also was the 1996 Leonard Bernstein Fellow in Composition at Tanglewood Music Centre in the USA studying with Bernard Rands, and a fellow at the Composers' Workshop, California State University (1998), with Brian Ferneyhough.

Simaku's music has been reaching audiences all over Europe and the USA for over a decade, and it has been awarded a host of accolades for its highly expressive qualities and its unique blend of drama, intensity and modernism.

Notable performances include, among others, those given by the Kreutzer Quartet, Arditti Quartet, English Northern Philharmonia, European Union Chamber Orchestra, MusikFabrik, Polish Radio Chamber Orchestra, the New London Orchestra, Amsterdam New Music Ensemble, Goldberg Ensemble, Tokyo Phonosphere Musicale, Insomnio Ensemble, Capricorn Ensemble, Norwegian Medieval Trio, New Music Players, Concorde (Dublin) and Austrian 'Ticom' Ensemble. Internationally renowned soloists such as Peter Sheppard Skaerved, Noriko Kawai, Rohan de Saram, Garth Knox, Ian Pace and Madeleine Shapiro have performed his solo pieces.

Simaku's works have been performed in festivals such as ISCM ('95, '99, 00, '01, '03, '04, '05, '06), Huddersfield, Rome, Venice, Tanglewood, Miami, Manchester, Zagreb Biennale, Munich Biennale, Cagliari, Odense (Denmark), KlangSpectrum (Austria), Viitassari (Finland), etc. Broadcasts of his music include those by the BBC Radio 3, Radio-France, ORF (Austria), SWR2, MDR, ADR (Germany), RDP Portugal, ABC (Australia), Swedish, Polish, Hellenic, Danish, Israeli, Croatian, Swiss, Icelandic and Brazil national radio stations. A concert-portrait featuring his music took place at the 2003 Begegnungen Internationale Konzertserie in Innsbruck, Austria. In 2000 he was granted British citizenship and now lives in York with his wife and two daughters.

**For more information on UYMP and our composers, and for general inquiries, please contact**

Tel: 01904 332434

e-mail: [info@uymp.co.uk](mailto:info@uymp.co.uk)

**For sales, hire and administration, please contact Administrator: Claire Irwin**

Tel: 01904 332434

e-mail: [claire@uymp.co.uk](mailto:claire@uymp.co.uk)

Winner of a number of prestigious awards such as Serocki International Prize and Lutoslawski Award, AHRC Fellowship, Leverhulme Research Fellowship, DAAD Award, and Honourable Mention at the Musical Personalities International Competition – Alexander Tansman 2006, Simaku is a lecturer in composition at the University of York.

His CD on Naxos 21st Century Classics series, released in May 2008, has been met with much critical acclaim.

## PRESS QUOTES

*"I get the sense of pure music in a serious vein, its composer driven only by an internal need to express himself."*

Fanfare Magazine, USA, September/October 2008

*"Simaku's idiom combines avant-gardism and modality in a manner all its own."*

*Avangarde und Ethnologie vereint*, by Frank Kämpfer, Deutschlandfunk, Cologne, July 2008

*"Tumultuous and glistening, with a deeply convincing inner strength, structural integrity and an impressively thunderous character."*

Politiken - Copenhagen, 2005

### [Hyllus for Orchestra]

*"... an imaginative and captivating piece."*

ISCM - World New Music Magazine, July 2006

*"...a piece of controlled, dramatic and surprisingly individual power."*

Keith Potter, *Tempo*, Cambridge, April 2005

### [String Quartets]

*"Thomas Simaku's string quartets have much to commend them ... Simaku has a keen ear for the texture of sounds. He writes sympathetically and perceptively for the strings, taking full advantage of the varying*

*timbres in their individual sonorities. His collective, co-operative statements could be loud and stern or soft and laid-back. An inner core of firmness, self-acceptance and repose underpin a series of animated explorations, almost imperceptibly. This stability renders sound free to soar and experiment. These 'voices from heaven' have an animated serenity, quite secular, outside time."*

Kenneth Carter - Classical Source, July 2007

### [Réflexions de la Croix III]

*"... the only work in the concert which had a real individual charisma."*

Stuttgarter Nachrichten, July 2006 - Review of musikFabrik concert at the ISCM, Stuttgart

*"This work was written for the brilliant Sheppard Skaerved, whose virtuoso violin playing fascinated the audience as it penetrated the ensemble's dynamic, streaming energy."*

Politiken - Copenhagen, 2005

### [Radius for 11 solo strings]

*"...the work's periodic climactic outbursts achieved striking effect."*

The Guardian

### [Soliloquy I]

*"In Simaku's Soliloquy, the expressive and technical potential of the solo violin is brilliantly transformed into an intense dramatic flow, where everything makes sense."*

Politiken – Copenhagen

*"A piece of unaccompanied violin writing which brings out the instrument's genius for passionate expression, fully realised in the young Luxembourg violinist Vania Lecuit's riveting interpretation."*

Peter Graham Woolf - Seen & Heard, London - review of the ISCM Festival, Luxembourg 2000

*"...what surprised the public the most and motivated the most comments, was Soliloquy by Simaku ... [who] demonstrated an astonishing knowledge of the violin."*

mundoclassico, Spain, 2002

### [Soliloquy III]

*"... Soliloquy III for solo viola by Thomas Simaku explores a wide range of high harmonics and microtonal effects, rapidly switching from violent chordal attacks to spare bowed fragments, reminiscent of Georgy Kurtág in its spare atomistic compression."*

Sun-Sentinel, Florida - review of the American  
Premiere at Miami ISCM festival 2002

### [The Eagle on the Cross]

*"The technical command, dramatic pacing and vivid orchestration made for a seriously impressive musical essay with a real sense of purpose and outrage."*

Yorkshire Evening Press, 1999

### [Three Albanian Folk Songs]

*"The elegant quality of the dark-sounding songs, by Thomas Simaku, was never in doubt."*

Birmingham Post, 2001

## LIST OF WORKS

### ORCHESTRAL

#### Arc-en-ciel 15'

Concerto for cello and orchestra:

picc.2(2<sup>nd</sup>+afl).2.2(2<sup>rd</sup>+bcl).2(2<sup>rd</sup>+cbn) / 2.3.2.1 / perc(2) / str/  
vc solo.

ISMN M 57020 949 1

score: £30

performance materials for hire

#### Concerto for Orchestra (2012) 16'

for full orchestra:

3(3<sup>rd</sup>+picc).3.3(3<sup>rd</sup>+bcl).3(3<sup>rd</sup>+cbn) / 4.3.3.1 /  
perc(4).timp.hp.pno.celesta / strings

first prize winner of the Witold Lutoslawski Birth  
Centenary Competition for Composers.

ISMN M 57036 463 3

score: £32

performance materials for hire

#### The Eagle on the Cross (1998) 17'

for full orchestra:

3(2<sup>nd</sup>+picc, 3<sup>rd</sup>+afl).3.3(3<sup>rd</sup>+bcl).3(3<sup>rd</sup>+cbn) / 4.3.3.1 /  
pf.cel.hp.perc(4) / str

first performance: English Northern Philharmonia,  
conducted by Elgar Howarth, Spring Festival of  
Contemporary Music, York, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1999.

ISMN M 57020 202 7

score: £40

performance materials for hire

#### Hyllus (2004) 16'

For full orchestra:

3(3<sup>rd</sup>+picc).3(3<sup>rd</sup>+ca).3(3<sup>rd</sup>+bcl).3(3<sup>rd</sup>+cbn) / 4.3.3.1 /  
pf.hp.cel.acc.perc(4) / str.

First performance: Slovenian Radio/TV Orchestra,  
conducted by Sian Edwards, ISCM/Zagreb Biennale  
Festival, 21<sup>st</sup> April 2005.

ISMN M 57020 844 9

score: £37

performance materials for hire

#### Plenilunio II per Orchestra d'Archi (2003-04)

13'

for chamber string orchestra - 6.6.4.3.1

first Prize of the 2004 Serocki International Competition

first performance: Polish Radio Chamber Orchestra,  
conducted by Agnieszka Duczmal, 6 June 2004

ISMN M 57020 755 8

score: £30

performance materials for hire

#### Shadows of a Brass Line (2011) 11'

for orchestra

3(2<sup>nd</sup>+picc, 3<sup>rd</sup>+atf).3(3<sup>rd</sup>+ca).3(3<sup>rd</sup>+bcl).2.cbn / 4.3.3.1 /  
timp.perc(4).pno / str

ISMN M 57036 317 9

score: £18

performance materials for hire

**The Three–Arched Bridge** 15'  
for symphony orchestra  
3(3<sup>rd</sup>+picc).3.3(3<sup>rd</sup>+bcl).3(3<sup>rd</sup>+cbn) /4.3.3.1 /  
pf.cel.hp.timp.perc(4) / str / 54 police whistles  
ISMN M 57020 939 2 score: £30  
performance materials for hire

---

## LARGE ENSEMBLE (8 OR MORE PLAYERS)

**Deux Hommages à Ligeti et Lutoslawski (2009)** 12'  
for large ensemble:  
1.1.1(+bcl).0 / 1.0.0.0 / pn. perc(2) / 1.0.1.1.0  
Wind quintet version also available.  
Commissioned by the Chamber Ensemble of the Opera  
North Players with funds provided by the Yorkshire and  
Humberside Arts Council.  
First performance: Northern Aldborough Festival, 5<sup>th</sup> July  
2001.  
ISMN M 57036 106 9 score: £25  
performance materials for hire

**Illuminazione (1998-9)** 12'  
for chamber ensemble  
1.1.1(+bcl).0 / 1.0.0.0 / pn. perc(2) / 1.0.1.1.0  
commissioned by the Chamber Ensemble of the Opera  
North Players with funds provided by the Yorkshire and  
Humberside Arts Council  
first performance: Northern Aldborough Festival, 5 July  
2001  
ISMN M 57020 206 5 score: £25  
performance materials for hire

**Insomnio for fifteen players (2007)** 16'  
for large ensemble:  
1(+afl).1.bcl(+cl).1 / 1.0.0.0 / acoustic gtr. mand. hp.  
pno(+cel) perc(1) / 1.1.1.1.1.  
Commissioned jointly by the Deutschlandfunk and  
Insomnio Ensemble.  
First performance: Forum Neuer Musik 2007,  
Deutschlandfunk, Cologne, conducted by Ulrich Pöhl, 24<sup>th</sup>  
March, 2007.  
ISMN M 57020 955 2 score: £45  
performance materials for hire

**Luxonorité (2001)** 9'  
for chamber ensemble  
2(1<sup>st</sup>+picc).0.2(2<sup>nd</sup>+bcl).0.asx.tsx / 1.2.1.1 /  
pf.acc.perc(1) / 0.0.2.3.0  
first performance: Luxembourg Sinfonietta, International  
Composition Prize Luxembourg, 20 April 2002  
ISMN M 57020 697 1 score: £25  
performance materials for hire

**Pas de deux (2002)** 12'  
for solo string quintet and children's string ensemble  
commissioned by the Goldberg Ensemble  
first performance: Goldberg Contemporary Festival,  
Manchester, the Goldberg Ensemble, 16 January 2002  
ISMN M 57020 695 7 score: £30  
performance materials for hire

**Plenilunio (1998)** 8'  
for twelve solo strings - 4.3.2.2.1  
first performance: European Union Chamber Orchestra,  
conducted Lavard Skou Larsen, University of York, 26  
February 1999  
ISMN M 57020 204 1 score: £37  
performance materials for hire

**Radius (2004)** 13'  
for 11 solo strings  
commissioned by the Goldberg Ensemble  
first performance: Goldberg Ensemble, conducted by  
Malcolm Layfield, Huddersfield, UK, 14 February 2005  
ISMN M 57020 842 5 score: £30  
performance materials for hire

**Réflexions de la Croix II (2003)** 12'  
for large ensemble  
1(+afl).0.1.bcl.0 / 0.1.0.0 / perc(1) / pno/ 1.1.1.1.0  
first performance: Ticom Ensemble, 30 November 2003  
Innsbruck, Austria  
ISMN M 57020 875 3 score: £40  
performance materials for hire

**Réflexions de la Croix III (2005)** 14'  
for violin and large ensemble  
afl, cl(+bcl), tpt, pf, perc(1) / 1.1.1.1.0  
first performance: Peter Sheppard  
Skaerved/Copenhagen Sinfonietta, cond. Frans  
Rasmussen, Royal National Library Hall *Den Sorte  
Diamant*, Copenhagen, 30 April 2005.  
Selected by the International Jury of the 2006 ISCM –  
World Music Days Festival in Stuttgart, performed by  
Hannah Weirich and MusikFabrik Ensemble, cond.  
Johannes Debus, 18 July 2006.  
ISMN M 57020 846 3 score: £40  
performance materials for hire

---

## SMALL ENSEMBLE (4-7 PLAYERS)

**Deux Hommages (2013)** 12'  
for saxophone quartet  
written for and dedicated to the Raschèr Saxophone  
Quartet  
ISMN M 57036 393 3 performing score: £7.95

**Réflexions de la Croix I (2003)** 9'  
for chamber ensemble  
afl, cl(+bcl), pf, perc, vn, vc  
first performance: Concorde Ensemble, Dublin, 7 March 2004  
ISMN M 57020 727 5 score: £21  
ISMN M 57020 728 2 parts: £17

**Radius – String Quartet No. 2 (2003)** 14'  
written for and dedicated to the Kreutzer Quartet  
first performance: Kreutzer Quartet, Augsburg International Festival Germany, 17 May 2003  
ISMN M 57020 769 5 score: £25

**Voci Celesti – String Quartet No. 3 (2004)** 13'  
Second Prize of the 2005 Lutoslawski Award  
first performance: Rubenstein Quartet, Warsaw, 14 February 2005  
ISMN M 57020 924 8 score: £18

**String Quartet No. 4 (2011)** 21'  
written for and dedicated to Quatuor Diotima  
first performance: Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2011  
ISMN M 57036 320 9 score: £18  
ISMN M 57036 321 6 parts: £22

**String Quartet No. 5 (2015)** 21'  
written for Quatuor Diotima, dedicated to Terry Holmes  
first performance: Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2015  
ISMN M 57036 652 1 score: £14.95  
ISMN M 57036 653 8 parts: £29.95

---

## SOLOS, DUOS AND TRIOS

**a2 (a) for viola and cello (2008)** 10'  
dedicated to Garth Knox and Rohan de Saram  
first performance: Intrasonus Festival Venice, 3 May 2008  
ISMN M 57036 011 6 performing score: £13

**a2 (b) for violin and cello (2008)** 10'  
dedicated to Peter Sheppard Skaerved and Neil Heyde  
ISMN M 57036 013 0 performing score: £13

**Albanian Folk Song 'Moj a Bukara Moré' (My Beautiful Morea) (2015)** 4'30"  
for wind instrument and piano  
also available for soprano or mezzo soprano and piano (see Voice and 1-3 instruments)  
score and part: £14.95  
ISMN M 57036 656 9 flute  
ISMN M 57036 657 6 alto flute  
ISMN M 57036 658 3 oboe  
ISMN M 57036 659 0 cor anglais

ISMN M 57036 660 6 clarinet  
ISMN M 57036 661 3 bass clarinet  
ISMN M 57036 662 0 bassoon

**Capriccioso (2015)** 8'  
for solo violin  
dedicated to and written for Peter Sheppard Skaerved  
first performance: King's Place, London, 26 November 2014  
ISMN M 57036 639 2 performing score: £9.95

**Clarimbasso (2008)** 10'  
for bass clarinet and percussion  
dedicated to Maria & Damien Harron  
first performance: York Late Music Festival, 9 June 2008  
ISMN M 57036 020 8 performing score: £13

**des pas chromatiques (2005)** 8'  
hommage à Debussy for piano  
ISMN M 57020 860 9 score: £18  
also available as part in the solo piano volume *Pianthology* £12

**Deux Esquisses (2013)** 6'  
for solo piano  
ISMN M 57036 515 9 score: £8.95

**Due Sotto-Voci per Violino Solo (2003)** 13'  
dedicated to Peter Sheppard Skaerved  
first performance: Peter Shepard Skaerved, New York, 25 February 2003  
ISMN M 57020 768 8 score: £18

**The Flight of the Eagle (2001)** 8'  
for solo piano  
first performance: Ian Pace, University of York, 18 June 2002  
ISMN M 57020 214 0 score: £21

**From Across the Sea (2006)**  
for 2 flutes and clarinet  
part of 'On Track', UYMP's Grade 4-level Education Volume  
ISMN M 57020 908 8 score and parts: £20

**Hommage à Kurtág (2011)** 6'  
for solo piano  
ISMN M 57036 319 3 score: £9

**Love Your Name (2011)** 3'30"  
for solo piano  
based on the theme of the soundtrack to the Albanian film *Duaje Emrim Tënd* (Love Your Name)  
ISMN M 57036 259 2 score: £7

- Soliloquy I (1998)** 10'  
for solo violin  
first performance: Vania Lecuit, ISCM, World Music Days  
in Luxembourg 4 October 2000  
ISMN M 57020 208 9 score: £18
- Soliloquy II (2001)** 13'  
for solo cello  
ISMN M 57020 209 6 score: £18
- Soliloquy III (2002)** 11'  
for solo viola  
first performance: Joel Hunter, Goldberg Contemporary  
Festival, Manchester, 16 February 2002  
ISMN M 57020 210 2 score: £18
- Soliloquy IV (2008)** 11'  
for bass clarinet  
ISMN M 57036 057 4 score: £18
- Soliloquy V, Flauto Acerbo (2008)** 11'  
for alto and tenor recorders, commissioned by  
Christopher Orton with funds provided by the BBC  
Performing Arts Fund. First performance by Christopher  
Orton at the Greenwich International Early Music  
Festival, 16 November 2008.  
Winner of the BASCA Award 2009 for the solo/duo  
instrumental category.  
ISMN M 57036 058 4 score: £13
- Soliloquy V (b), Flauto Acerbo (2012)** 11'  
for flute  
ISMN M 57036 364 3 score: £13
- Soliloquy VI (2013)** 7'  
for soprano saxophone  
ISMN M 57036 506 7 score: £13
- Stepping Up (2009)** 11'  
for solo piano  
ISMN M 57036 118 2 score: £13
- Trois Esquisses (2011)** 11'  
for solo piano  
written for Joseph Houston  
ISMN M 57036 322 3 score: £12

---

## VOICE AND 0-3 INSTRUMENTS

- Akhmatova Song (2011)** 7'  
for soprano and cello  
text by Anna Akhmatova *Why did you poison the water*  
(1935)  
ISMN M 57020 323 0 score: £10

- Albanian Folk Song 'Moj a Bukara Moré' (My  
Beautiful Morea) (2015)** 4'30"  
for soprano and piano  
version for mezzo-soprano and piano also available  
also available for wind instrument and piano  
(see Solos, Duos and Trios)  
ISMN M 57020 640 8 (soprano) score and part: £6.95  
ISMN M 57020 666 8 (mezzo-soprano) score and part: £6.95

- Need for Speech (2011)** 6'  
for soprano and piano  
text by Ursula Vaughan Williams  
ISMN M 57036 325 4 score: £5  
Also included in the volume 'Finding Ursula Vaughan Williams'

- Three Albanian Folk Songs (2001)** 9'  
for two sopranos and alto  
written for the Norwegian Mediaeval Trio  
first performance: Birmingham Early Music Festival, 10  
November 2001  
ISMN M 57020 213 3 three performing score: £14.95

- Locked Door (2010)** 6'30"  
for soprano and piano  
text by Visar Zhiti  
ISMN M 57036 291 2 score: £10

---

## CHOIR, ACCOMPANIED

- The Rose of the World (2014)** 12'  
for soprano, SATB choir, fl, cl, b.cl., 3 perc., pno., vln., vc.  
text by W B Yeats  
First performance: Rachel Nicholls, Philharmonia  
Chorus, BBC Concert Orchestra, cond. Stephen  
Cleobury. Easter at King's Festival, King's College  
Chapel, Cambridge, 1st April 2015, 7.30pm - live  
broadcast on BBC Radio 3.  
ISMN M 57036 634 7 score: £17.95  
performance materials for hire

- Silver (1995)** 6'  
for choir (SAA) and piano  
commissioned by the New London Children's Choir with  
funds by the Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust  
first performance: New London Children's Choir,  
conducted by Ronald Corp, St. John's Smith Square, 21  
March 1996  
ISMN M 57020 212 6 choral score: £4
-

## CHOIR, UNACCOMPANIED

### Albanian Wedding Song 'Qenke veshur me të bardha' (2001) 3'

for female choir  
part of *Three Albanian Folk Songs*  
ISMN M 57036 579 1 choral score: £1.75

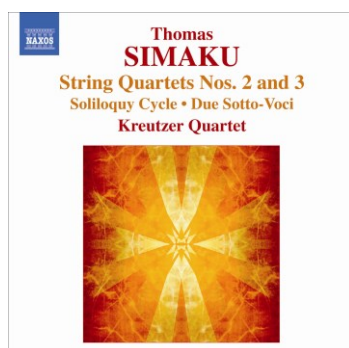
### Three Albanian Folk Songs (2001) 9'

for female choir  
ISMN M 57020 708 4 choral score: £3.50

---

## RECORDINGS

In addition to these, a perusal CD of live performances of Simaku's music is also available.  
Please contact [info@uymmp.co.uk](mailto:info@uymmp.co.uk) for more information.



### CD Portrait: Naxos 21<sup>st</sup> Century Classics series

**Includes:** *String Quartets Nos 2 and 3;*  
*Soliloquy I, II and III; Due Sotto-Voci per*  
*Violino Solo*

Performed by the Kreutzer Quartet  
Label: Naxos 8.570428  
Released: 28 April 2008



## Pianthology

**Includes:** *des pas chromatiques – hommage à*  
*Debussy*

Performed by Nicola Losseff (piano)  
Label: NMC Recordings NMC  
Released: March 2008