



APL50069

## **New Album explores the relationship between Landscape, Migration, and Refuge**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 2022:** highly praised at its 2019 premiere by the award-winning SOLI Chamber Ensemble, *The Clearing and the Forest*, is an important work by composer and multimedia artist SCOTT ORDWAY that explores the relationship between landscape, migration, and refuge. The work is set to reach new audiences through an upcoming release on GRAMMY®-nominated label Acis.

“In 2018, like many others I watched the forced separation of small children from their families at the US border with horror,” ORDWAY describes, “and I was immediately moved to create a work through which I could boldly, plainly, and publicly affirm my support for the rights of refugees as well as our sacred, ancient, and transcultural obligation to provide shelter to those who seek it. In this piece, I sought to forcefully and unequivocally articulate my own views on a subject which continues to divide our society.”

The work tells the story of a people whose cold, northern home has become an impossible place in which to remain. Forced to leave all that they know, they wander both individually and in groups in search of a new home. Eventually, they reunite, and are perhaps better for having made the journey, but together they have a memory of the place they have lost. In three “acts”, the chamber work represents the stages of their journey and adaptation to different climates. We are drawn to their experience of novel natural environments, and changes to their daily routines, particularly the impact on food and agriculture.

The live, evening-length performance includes a set designed entirely of botanical materials, with the performers doubling as silent actors, performing in, with, and around these natural elements, thus creating a “complete and meaningful” experience (*San Antonio Express-News*). As these found, foraged, and farmed botanic materials change, the fragrance in the performance space evolves accordingly, conjuring a provocative, multisensory “immersive landscape” (*San Antonio Current*). SOLI Chamber Ensemble presented the work’s premiere at McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, Texas before COVID-19.

The project received support from the Aaron Copland Fund for Music; the Amphion Foundation; the City of San Antonio, Department of Arts and Culture; and Rutgers University.

Full Title: *Scott Ordway: The Clearing and the Forest*

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Press contact: [cynthia.fischer@acisproductions.com](mailto:cynthia.fischer@acisproductions.com)

DPP: [www.acisproductions.com/ordwaysoli](http://www.acisproductions.com/ordwaysoli)

Performers: Soli Chamber Ensemble [*Stephanie Key, Ertan Torgul, David Mollenauer, Carolyn True, Scott Ordway*]

Engineering, editing and mastering by Alexander Brusencev

Producer: Scott Ordway

Recorded: January 6–12, 2022

Ruth Taylor Concert Hall, Trinity University, San Antonio, TX, USA

Cover photography and design: Scott Ordway

**Composer SCOTT ORDWAY** creates boundary-defying mixed-media projects called “exquisite” (*The New York Times*) and “a marvel” (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*). Heard on major stages around the world, his compositions revel in their multi-disciplinary reach, and reflect his vast creative curiosity. Ordway’s remarkably diverse works fuse music with text (frequently his own), video, digital soundscape, photography, and experimental theater to explore an eclectic array of contemporary, often urgent themes including ecology and landscape, architecture, protest and revolution, and urban life. Hailed as “an American response to Sibelius” by *The Boston Globe* and praised for its “arresting originality” (*Gramophone*), his music has been commissioned or performed by the Hong Kong and Buffalo Philharmonics; Tucson Symphony; Hong Kong Arts, Beijing Modern, and Aspen Music Festivals; Tanglewood New Fromm Players; Berlin’s Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler; Sweden’s Norrbotten NEO; Yale Institute of Sacred Music; The Thirteen; Lorelei and SOLI Chamber Ensemble; and the Jasper, Momenta, Daedalus, and Arneis String Quartets. Current projects include an opera on the Arab Spring, with a libretto by the Algerian author, scholar, and journalist Meryem Belkaïd; *The End of Rain*, for Roomful of Teeth and the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, featuring original landscape photography and crowdsourced texts from hundreds of Californians impacted by wildfire and drought. He is Assistant Professor of Composition at Rutgers University, and previously taught at the Curtis Institute of Music.

**SOLI Chamber Ensemble** has been giving voice to 20th- and 21st-century contemporary chamber music since 1994, mesmerizing audiences for nearly three decades with their engaging performances, ensuring the future of new music through educational initiatives, and continually renewing their commitment to the music of living composers through performances and commissions. Winner of the 2013 Chamber Music America and ASCAP Adventurous Programming Award and a 2020 Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Grant, SOLI continues to champion new works, new contexts, and new audiences for the music of our time.

**THE FOREST** — a provocative new evening-length, multisensory work for chamber ensemble which dramatizes the relationship between landscape, migration, and refuge. With a set designed entirely of botanical materials, members of SOLI Chamber Ensemble double as silent actors, performing in, with, and around these natural elements, immersing concertgoers and adding depth and dimension to the experience. The ensemble appears in various locations throughout the performance space, sometimes evoking distance and separation, and other times, projecting togetherness. From evergreen forest, to temperate forest, to tropical forest, the sculptural, plant-based sets transform as the piece progresses, evoking human movement over vast expanses of land. And as these found, foraged, and farmed botanic materials change, the fragrance in the performance space evolves accordingly, conjuring a feast for the senses.

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