

**So Far, So Near.** <https://bluecliffrecords.bandcamp.com/album/so-far-so-near>

*Stephen Nachmanovitch: Violectra, viola, percussion, waterphone, voice, electronics.*

*Anders Hagberg: Flute, alto flute, bass flute, electronics.*

1. Our Undeciphered World 05:15
2. Lascaux 04:02
3. Sacoglossa 02:38
4. So Far, So Near 06:19
5. Temenos 02:26
6. South Pole 06:07

Total time 26 minutes, Recorded in June, 2021.

*James Joyce liked to refer to *felix culpa* – the fortunate fall. One of the hidden blessings of the coronavirus pandemic of 2020-2021 was that musicians living in quarantine have learned to play together over the internet and discover ways to improvise together in high quality recordings over a long distance. Stephen Nachmanovitch (Charlottesville, Virginia) and Anders Hagberg (Gothenburg, Sweden) have become friends and musical collaborators even though we have not yet met in person. We present you this first essay in our collaboration.*

*Anders – "You could say that I got to know Stephen through his books, which have been very important to me and I have felt a resonance and a kinship with his thoughts on improvisation in music and in life. We were supposed to meet in the US in the summer of 2020, but the corona pandemic caused my tour to be canceled. Instead, we have had contact via Zoom and the idea was born to try to play together in real time. The music presented here is an excerpt from our first joint improvised meeting and I feel that the kinship between us also resonates in our music."*

The music presented here is totally improvised or an example of what is called *real time composing*. However, to be free and open in your mind and playing there is a lot of mental and musical preparation that have to take place before. "Art is the balance of what to prepare and what to leave for the moment, and to have the wisdom to know the difference" as Stephen is writing in *The Art of Is*.

The purpose with the session was to explore if it was possible to play together online over Zoom. Stephen was recording his parts in Virginia, US, using Ableton Live and Anders his parts in Sweden, using Logic. We hadn't discussed anything *what* we would play, so after checking that the technical part was OK, we just started our dialogue with our instruments. It resulted in a couple of longer suites. While playing we noticed that there were some latency issues which made it difficult to play rhythmic music in sync, so the character of the music is ambient and floating. In between the suites we both changed instruments and/or effects which created a variety to the whole.

In late August we were in touch again and agreed on the quality of the music. We did some editing and Stephen mixed and mastered the session into the final result.

**Stephen Nachmanovitch** is an improvisational violinist and composer working across multiple media and art forms. He is the author of two books on the creative process, *The Art of Is* and *Free Play*. He has taught and lectured in many countries on creativity and the spiritual and social underpinnings of art, and on the ecology of mind. In the 1970s he was a pioneer in free improvisation on violin, viola and electric violin. He has presented master classes and workshops at many conservatories and universities, and has had numerous appearances on radio, television, and at music and theater festivals. He has collaborated with other artists in media including music, dance, theater, and film, and has developed programs melding art, music, literature, and computer technology.

[www.freeplay.com](http://www.freeplay.com)

**Anders Hagberg** is a Swedish flautist, soprano saxophonist, composer and professor of musical performance/improvisation at the University of Gothenburg, Academy of Music and Drama (Sweden). He has toured the world both with his own music and as a soloist in many ensembles. Improvisation and interdisciplinary collaborations are key aspects his artistry such as working across genres and cultures as well as with other art forms like dance and visual arts. He has written music for films and dance productions and released a number of albums under his own name. His international collaborators include artists from India, the Middle East, Japan, Brazil, West Africa, the United States, South Korea and Europe.

[www.andershagberg.se](http://www.andershagberg.se)