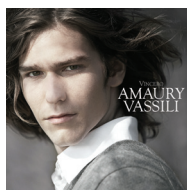


Coming Soon



CD	Vincero
ARTIST	Amaury Vassili
LABEL	Warner Music
AVAILABLE	10 May

Allegedly the youngest tenor in the world at a babyish 20 years of age, Frenchman Amaury Vassili is one to watch – if you've a taste for the poppier side of classical, that is (or, as he describes it, 'pop-lyrical'). While the tracklisting for his debut record – which has already reached platinum status in his home country – promises a couple of stadium weepies, including a rendition of U2's *With Or Without You* (cringe) and a duet with Katherine Jenkins for *Endless Love*, there are also a few serious notes in the form of some reworked Beethoven (melodies from his Sonata Pathétique appear in *Fragile*) and Elgar (March No 1 forms the basis of *Lucente Stella*). Vassili's romantic tastes match his glowering persona – we hear he's a fan of Tim Burton and the *Twilight* saga. Ladies, please.



CD	Title tbc
ARTIST	ETHEL
LABEL	Thunderbird
AVAILABLE	29 June

String quartet ETHEL has long been applauded for its outreach work, and now the group is going one step further by releasing a disc of compositions by 11 young American Indian composers. The musicians involved are all of the Chickasaw Nation, Oklahoma, and aged between 13 and 19. The project is particularly close to ETHEL's heart as the quartet is ensemble-in-residence with the Native American Composers Apprenticeship Project and has been making workshops and performances accessible to hundreds of children in various American Indian reservations for more than a decade.



CD	Sound Census
ARTIST	Endymion
LABEL	NMC
AVAILABLE	Tbc

Chamber music ensemble Endymion is no stranger to experimentation having performed more than 150 world premieres in its 30 years. In 2009, the group celebrated its third decade of operation with its Sound Census festival at Kings Place, where it performed in 13 concerts across four days, gave 27 works their world premieres and hosted workshops. Much of the fruit of that productive week is on display across this two-disc package, itself entitled *Sound Census*. Here, the ensemble performs numerous new compositions commissioned especially for its anniversary, including pieces by Anthony Payne, Simon Bainbridge and Simon Holt.



Community spirit

Lauren Strain speaks to musical all-rounder Sam Amidon ahead of his album release and UK tour

Hello, Sam. Please describe by way of anecdote how the Whale Watching Tour has gone so far.

We had a Sigourney Weaver film festival – *Hannibal*, which she is not in, but which carries her imprint throughout; *Alien Resurrection*, which is really good, and *Misery*, which she also is not in, but Kathy Bates is.

Each of you involved in the tour – yourself, Nico Muhly, Ben Frost and Valgeir Sirgurdsson – is a force behind the Bedroom Community label. How did you get together?

It happened because of Nico – he took my music over to Iceland, and then he took me over to Iceland. It is a wonderful community of people. And, since I like to take naps, it is especially wonderful because there are nice bedrooms that I can take naps in.

What do you learn from Nico, Ben and Valgeir?

I learn about space and sound and *fiskur*.

Are there any major differences in the way you guys 'speak' music?

We have all worked together enough that we know where the intersections and language differences and similarities are. The main difference is that my reminders are scrawled messily on pieces of paper that I then leave onstage and don't realise I am missing until midway through the next concert, whereas Nico has a computer printer attached to his piano that prints out what is happening. Sometimes my stray pieces of scrawl make their way over to the fruits of Nico's printer, and a beautiful Artists' Book is created.

Do you get sick of journalists going, 'Ooh, you're not a classical artist, but you're doing a classical collaboration?!' as though it's unheard of for a musician to do more than one thing?

I don't have to deal with that question as often as Nico does actually. I think the main thing is that it's not so much a question of what *kind* of musician somebody is as of what *spirit* they have.

Was folk music your education?

I took violin lessons as a child, starting when I was three, and I always played fiddle tunes. That was what I did best. But I also took classical lessons and went to a mostly classical music camp called Camp Allegro, my most important memories of which are playing capture the flag at recess and something called Aldor where we all lay down on the floor of the gym and listened to a piece of music in the dark. Also, one time, Thomas and I walked accidentally through a wasps' nest and I got one wasp sting on each ear. My already large ears grew to an enormous size and were bright red and had homeopathic baking soda mixture hanging off of them for the next day.

How does your video art tie in with your music?

I don't make video art, I make video mistakes. But the words I speak in the videos are often my own, whereas the words I sing in the songs on my albums are from folksongs.

What do Nico's arrangements do for your new record, *I See the Sign*?

Nico's beautiful arrangements appear in the way that I least expect them. He understands the words better than I do, and he makes some important things happen to those words!

What led to the writing of this record?

I learned a lot of the original versions of the songs from my parents, who in turn learned them from recordings of Bessie Jones, who was a singer and song collector from the Georgia Sea Islands. Some of them are from children's singing games.

Sam Amidon's new album, *I See the Sign (Bedroom Community)* is available from 19 April. He tours this month with the Whale Watching Tour. Dates: London Barbican (20 April), Dublin National Concert Hall (21), Manchester St Anne's Church (22), Brighton St George's Church (23), Bristol Arnolfini (24), Reading Concert Hall (25) www.samamidon.com

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