

Submitted by Russell Fox  
Conductor, Lecturer  
May 10, 2021

# Dreaming of Whales

Elevating Music & Film from Entertainment to Art

While the accepted answer to “*How do you get to Carnegie Hall?*” might be “*Practice, practice, practice!*” most working creative musicians realize that both the question and the answer are flawed.

Yes, a performing artist’s technique is important, and repeated disciplined practice is certainly required. Without a doubt, stunning technique has gotten many performers onto the stage. However, that has never been the goal for any serious creative artist, no matter what the genre. There is a much higher intention at play here. Engaged audiences don’t generally go to Carnegie Hall or any other performance center to just be entertained. They desire something deeper and more transformative from the music, some transcendent experience to clarify their perception of life itself and their place within it. They are, in fact, hungry for that all-to-rare time-stopping embrace of ‘true art’ as opposed to a pleasant yet passing brush with entertaining distractions, or mere technique.

Sedona based composer, singer and film scorer **Christel Veraart** is a uniquely gifted artist whose electronic work fully captures the involved listener, transporting us to unanticipated depths of awareness and emotion. While atmospheric soundscape compositions are widely referred to as ‘Space Music’ Christal Veraart’s profound talents take us to entirely new Universes. Most composers of ‘space music’ create satisfying single mood, somewhat static sound environments. However, Christel Veraart’s rich and varied soundscapes are deeply informed by her extensive training in Western Classical music and its sense of form and flow, as well as her having lived around the globe absorbing a wealth of cultural influences.

This enriched multi-cultural mixture of influences was on full display in Veraart's 2020 release *Pleiades*. The continuing global high praise for *Pleiades* is in large part due to Veraart incorporating her own improvised voice generating melody, harmonic form, and an undeniable & immediate heartfelt human resonance. *Dreaming of Whales* continues her brilliant pairing of natural voice with the limitless options of digital composition.

*Dreaming of Whales* was originally conceived as an immersive, meditative soundscape to immediately follow the Sedona screening of German director Sebastian Jobst's poetic film *Ama'ara – Song of the Whales* about spiritual singer and healer Marina Trost as she follows her calling to create a new and loving relationship between humans and these majestic beings. Once Sebastian Jobst heard Veraart's inspiring music, he felt called to create a beautiful short movie combining his own and composer/singer Christel Veraart's strengths. This unique creative process is actually the reverse of the normal procedure of first conceiving & shooting the film followed by the music being scored to fit the video. The disarming & intense results of this highly creative reversal left this reviewer both speechless and in tears. Not since Claude Debussy's *La Mer*, Ralph Vaughn Williams' *A Sea Symphony*, and Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes* has a composer so completely captured the mystery, majesty and inviting magic of the unworldly fluid depths whales call home.

Within Christel Veraart's all-encompassing musical style time does seem to stand still. The world we know dissolves, and we are removed from our personal history & concerns. In deed, we are changed and somehow more complete. Her latest project ***"Dreaming of Whales"*** is just such an immersive and transformative sonic & visual experience. It's world premiere at the May 2021 Illuminate Film Festival of Sedona should prove to be an unparalleled experiential high point for audiences at this world-renowned destination festival.

\* \* \* \* \*