

Viidakko sleeve notes

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Viidakko is a Finnish word, which means 'jungle'. These tracks have come together in a totally organic way, much like the tracks on my first album, *Paradoxa*. In both cases it was never a conscious decision to create an album - one day I simply realised it was there. If and when *Paradoxa* feels more personal to me, the tracks on *Viidakko* feel more detached. They seem to live in a world - or a jungle - of their own. *Viidakko* is very much my feel-good album. I love to play these tracks, visit them, whenever I find myself taking life a bit too seriously. *Paradoxa* is a rather serious album - *Viidakko* much less so. As the album was forming, I began to see and mirror the idea of a natural jungle versus man-made "asphalt jungle". *Malibu Girl* and *Bermuda Boy* are the present day lovers who haven't yet met; a modern version of Adam and Eve, possibly, living in the city jungle. They are watched over by *5th Avenue Angels*, which is inspired by the 80s police drama *Cagney & Lacey*. Some of the tracks deal with flora and fauna, while others are linked to the natural elements. There's a place for everything and everyone in this Jungle. There's a lot of light in these tracks. I hope they will lift you up, too.

August 7th 2022
London

1. Emperor Scorpion

First incarnation of the track was a left-hand solo piano piece, a real tornado, which I still occasionally play. It then transmuted into a two-hand Hammond organ piece, and finally into a synth track. This particular Scorpion floats in and beyond space, I think, and is the size of a galaxy (or two). Seems to be mainly friendly. Colours: violet-magenta-indigo-black. Recorded on GarageBand Synth Pads.

2. 5th Avenue Angels (piano)

I began to see visions of Manhattan skyline in my mind... this coincided with memories of *Cagney & Lacey*, the 80s police drama, which I used to watch as a kid. Somehow the two became merged together, with echoes of this very light piano melody, which didn't have anything to do with the theme music of the TV show. Recorded on Noire by Native Instruments.

3. Pulpa

I was studying herbal medicine and nutritional therapy in the late 90s. In one of the classrooms there was this old, worn-out harmonium. I became conscious of the melody (part 1) only a few weeks later, I think - I suddenly realised I'd been playing it for a while. Part 2 was originally on piano, but Clavinet seemed to mix better with Hammond, once I had made that decision to move away from the harmonium. It's a 90s hippy tune, through and through. Deal with it. Colours: fruit pulp. Recorded on Hammond B3, Hohner Clavinet D6 and GarageBand Synth Pads.

4. Song of Stones

Around '93 or '94 I had this incredibly vivid dream, where I was walking somewhere in Arizona. I knew Grand Canyon was close by, I could feel it. I was walking along an open road with vast, open space around me. In the sky I saw the purest, whitest clouds I'd ever seen. In the dream I said

out loud, "Now those are the American Clouds - clouds you can see nowhere else." That's when I woke up. Remember *Thunderheart* (1992)? Whenever Ted Thin Elk appeared, my floodgates opened. They still do. This track was originally called Indian Sky Melody. It's dedicated to Verdell Primeaux (Dakota Sioux) and Johnny Mike (Navajo), and the Native American Church. Colours: earth which receives tears and blood. Recorded on Noire by Native Instruments and Hammond B3.

5. Beach Improv

I'd like to tell you that Beach Improv was recorded on a remote, tropical island, with pristine turquoise water and palm trees gently swaying in the wind, and suddenly there, in front of me appeared this old upright - still miraculously in tune - and I just happened to have the recording gear with me... but that would be an outrageous lie. No, I was at home, in London, ready to go to bed, with sirens blaring outside and people yelling in the street. I'd been working on *Bermuda Boy* since early morning, hardly ate a thing, and felt ready to keel over. I fell asleep as soon as my head hit the pillow - only to wake up 10 minutes later to a tune playing in my head: "This is how BB needs to sound like!" As I rushed to the piano to play the tune, I was totally confused; I thought I already had *Bermuda Boy* sorted, all the instruments and the arrangement, everything. After I played the melody I realised it wasn't BB but something entirely different. I recorded a small segment of it, and the next day sat down and played and recorded the track at one go (wouldn't be much of an improv otherwise, would it). Recorded on The Giant by Native Instruments.

6. Malibu Girl

Malibu Girl and Bermuda Boy are the lovers on this album. I couldn't decide if it should be Bermuda Girl and Malibu Boy, or the other way round. So I tossed a coin. I think she's been through a lot. But it hasn't blackened her heart. She still believes in beauty. One day she'll meet Bermuda Boy, and live happily ever after. I believe her. Colours: night sky with stars and a pair of inherited earrings. Recorded on Hybrid Keys, Absynth 5 and Noire by Native Instruments, and GarageBand Synth Pads.

7. Bermuda Boy

He's one of a kind. He surfs a lot. He's not afraid of anything much. He knows Malibu Girl is out there somewhere, and he knows one day they'll meet. He knows his life will change forever then. He knows Malibu Girl doesn't surf. That's ok. Sometimes he can hear her voice in the crashing waves. Colours: speed of light. Recorded on Analog Dreams & Absynth 5 by Native Instruments, and GarageBand Synth Pads.

8. Wheel Dance

I have no recollection whatsoever when, where or how this one arrived. It's been there, circling its way round the keys, for at least a decade, if not longer. A part of me dislikes it, as it's so repetitive, but that very quality also makes me dive into it, following its circle dance. A love-hate thing, I guess. I think it lives in a world completely of its own. Colours: wheat and barley. Recorded on Hohner Clavinet D6, Percussion & Synth Pads by GarageBand, and Davul (Spotlight Collection: Middle East) & Tanpura (Spotlight Collection: India) by Native Instruments.

9. Jitterbug Beetle

Hello, little jitterbug! I like you a lot. This piece, if correctly played, should completely transcend the piano. I did my best, but it's lightyears from anything substantial. I think the only person who could reach Gold is Erik Satie. Tough luck. Recorded on Noire by Native Instruments and GarageBand Percussion.

10. Dawn From 1,200 Feet

Frequency of hope. Don't give up, no matter how bad it seems. Recorded on The Grandeur by Native Instruments and GarageBand Synth Pads.

11. Rhodes Kirtan

I used to have this old, worn cassette in the late 90s, which had maybe six or seven variations of the *Baba Nam Kevalam* kirtan. They were sung by what sounded like a rather small but all the more ardent group of devotees, slightly out of tune, and possibly recorded in the patchouli scented seventies. Two of the variations got stuck in my mind, as the melodies were so catchy. I thought one day it might be interesting to do a variation of both on the keys. Because hippies will save the world. Recorded on Hohner Clavinet D6 + Fender Rhodes + Native Instruments: Absynth 5, Tanpura & Harmonium (Spotlight Collection: India) and Daf (Spotlight Collection: Middle East).