

# HYMNAL Traces In The Finnish Countryside



The interview with Varjosielu from Haïve took place some days before the release date of this mag and was conducted very

spontaneously. I guess you find all useful information on this act in the review on the page before, so I keep this intro short...

::: interview answered by Varjosielu :::

It's not really often that I experience metal music as an invitation to discover a specific countryside, but sometimes it happens and it's a fascinating experience. Remembering Amorphis' milestone "Tales From The Thousand Lakes", I think you achieved something comparable with "Mieli Maassa" while reflecting the landscape's beauty in music and artwork (I can't translate the lyrics). Can you relate to that idea and how would you describe your approach with Haïve? And by the way: what does the name mean?

I'm honoured with that comparison, early Amorphis is definitely one of my biggest musical influences. When I started working on the debut album, I wanted to make the artwork have the same feeling that the music has. And that feelings is not eternal darkness nor nuclear winter, but a bright or stormy summer or autumn day in Finnish countryside or wilderness. All of the photos were shot near my home, so those sights obviously have influenced me when making music & writing lyrics. The word "häive" means something like "trace" in english. So it's a very indefinite term, and it doesn't restrict me in any way.



Imagine you could choose a place for this interview to be done face to face and you were independent from any costs - where should it take place and for what reasons? What would you offer to drink?

Argh, that's a tough one. There are couple of choices, all of them in Finland of course, because I haven't travelled that much to know what other countries have to offer. I would probably choose some old farm in the countryside, or some cottage in Lapland. And the point of time would be the summer solstice. The non-alcoholic drink would be springwater straight from spring and the alcoholic one some english-style apple cider.

You play all instruments yourself. This raises of course my suspicion that you are the prototype of the misanthropic black metal warrior far too evil to play together with others, but maybe it is just a matter of talented and like-minded musicians available that you realize most of Haïve on your own?

I have never played in someone else's band,

so maybe I'm quite a tyrant when it comes to music. I like to be the one making the final decisions because I often have quite strong vision of the final outcome. I do play in a more traditional band, Auringon Hauta, and we at least try to make the decisions together. There isn't any particular reason why Häive is "just" a one-man band. Things just are so easy when you don't have to ask anything from anyone. Also the songs I make for Häive don't need any huge virtuosity, so with a little practise I can handle everything myself.

**I can imagine it to be sometimes rather difficult to judge your own music when you're absorbed in a great process of recording and can't listen to your music from a more objective level. Who helps you and whose judgement do you trust?**

So far I haven't needed anybody's help on judging my music. I make demo-versions of each song and if the idea works, I hear it myself. Taking brakes from recording helps alot.

**The booklet says that you play a 10-stringed kantele that you constructed yourself. How does the experience of creating an instrument with your own hands shape your idea of music, in general as well as in personal matters? Do you feel linked to the past when you construct and play on such an instrument?**

I feel linked, yeah. The sound of a kantele made of wood block is just so ancient and timeless. And of course the feeling when playing your selfmade instrument is very different than when playing a bought one. I have also made a bunch of other instruments

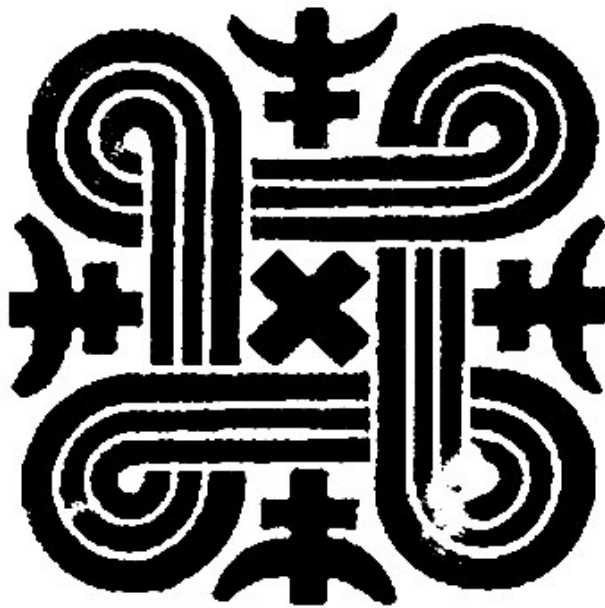
besides different kanteles, and I would recommend that to everyone. You can't buy a self-made instrument with money!

**The music itself is of proud character and seems to be rooted in your personal perception of nature, moreover it is described as "wistful" in the promo sheet; a description to which I can easily relate to when listening to your songs. When do you compose them? Do you need a certain mood and what experiences influence you in a way that the music turns out so yearning?**

I don't need a certain mood, everything comes from something deeper than just a mood. The yearning in music and lyrics is the yearning for better values of life that ones was true. I usually start making a song with recording some ideas to computer, and building a complete track on top of those recordings. So I don't ever have a complete song in my mind when I start recording, the songs grow by themselves.

**You told me that you nowadays work on the second full length album. With what motivation did you start the work and what challenge does this process mean for you?**

Originally I didn't mean to make any full-length albums for Häive, but because all the labels were interested in releasing just albums, I decided to give it a try. Now with the first album released, I honestly don't know what the next chapter will be. Propably not an album, but an EP. I have one song ready now, and that song is a little different from the debut album's material. The whole song is



composed with kantele and thus it has more ethnic vibes than any previous material.

**Some days ago I listened the new Moonsorrow EP for the first time and was quite astonished to hear that they covered Metallica's "For Whom The Bell Tolls". Is there any song, be it classic or obscure, that you would like to re-arrange as personal cover-version as well?**

"Red Sky over the Land of Fells" from Darkwoods my Betrothed (Fin) was the song that I wanted to make a cover version of. I even made a demo version of it, but the lyrics were so hard to translate to Finnish in a way that they still would sound good, that I gave up.

**Your homepage is extraordinarily simple and totally reduced on the basic facts of Haive which is sympathetic in this age of superfluous media overkill. Goes the reason**

**for that circumstance beyond your programming skills or "lazyness"?**

There hasn't been any particular reason to make any fancy website. I'm planning to make a new one, but that won't be much more fancier than the current site. Just visually more interesting. There's no need to add for example personal information from me. What's my favourite band, favourite colour, what equipment do I play...? Who cares?!? No one should.

**Varjosielu, thanks for taking the time to answer my questions! Hope you weren't too bored...**

Not bored at all. Thanks for this opportunity, and keep up the good work!

[www.haive.tk](http://www.haive.tk)

all photography from "Mieli Maassa"

