



TOP
OF THE
WORLD
TRACK 3

Benedicte Maurseth *Hárr*

Hubro Music (43 mins)



Hardanger virtuoso blends in ambient and archival sounds



In previous recordings, international performances, and her 2019 book *To Be Nothing*, Benedicte Maurseth has showcased the celestial beauty of the Hardanger fiddle, named for its centuries-old origins in her native region of south-western Norway. The instrument is fitted with resonant strings underlying the four bowed strings found on a concert violin. Though she's a guardian of traditional Norwegian folk melodies and their ornamentations, Maurseth has advocated for embrace of, and collaboration with, other genres and instruments.

On *Hárr*, the Norse name for a mountain on the alpine Hardangervidda plateau, Maurseth invites performers on bass, electric guitar, vibraphone,

marimba, saxophone, harmonica, percussion and the *langeleik*, a traditional drone zither. Integrating alluring electronic effects, these Norwegian musicians create a folk-based acoustic travelogue which also incorporates the sounds of birds, bees, and, the emblematic reindeer, whose snorts and bells are audible. And there are snippets of an archival interview with a hunter and reindeer herder, Maurseth's great-great-grandfather. Her interspersed contributions on Hardanger fiddle are as entrancing as ever, whether channelling traditional music or improvising. The imaginative integration of all elements in a sort of propulsive acoustic ecosystem is uniquely and irresistibly stunning.

JEFF KALISS

TRACK TO TRY *Hreinn*