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Olivier Messiaen's "Quartet for the End of Time" was composed while he was incarcerated in Stalag VIII-A, a German prisoner-of-war camp, during World War II. A quietly luminous vision of texts from Revelation, the work was conceived at a moment when the collapse of time and history may not have seemed far-off.

The quartet inspired Messiaen's student Tristan Murail, a founder of spectralism, to write "Stalag VIII A" (2018). Intended as a prelude to the Messiaen, it borrows overtone-saturated chords from the older composer and generates from them an icy atmosphere that alludes not only to the earlier work's immutable subject matter, but also to the frigid conditions of its premiere. In this deeply attentive performance by the Belgian ensemble Het Collectief, Murail's music seems to unspool in one long frozen breath, leading directly, and effectively, to the first notes of Messiaen's quartet.

As for that piece, the Het Collectief players give a performance that illustrates the extent to which this once-difficult music now feels like core repertoire. If the group falls just short of the clairvoyance of the still-unsurpassed Tashi recording from the mid-1970s, they do a superb job emphasizing the work's dance rhythms. And the "Abyss of the Birds" clarinet solo, played by Julien Hervé, is utterly riveting.

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