

Sonninen and Heininen in a stirring concert

Ahti Sonninen's arrangement of Koska valaissee kointähtönen (When Does the Morning Star Light up) was astoundingly beautiful. ...The diminuendo at the end of Heininen's Lamentation and Praise was exquisitely intensive. A strong harmonic tension prevailed throughout the impressively interpreted work.

Ilkka 3.11. / Jaakko Laakso

Ahti Sonninen: When Does the Morning Star Light up, Paavo Heininen: Lamentation and Praise, Op. 68

Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra, cond. Juha Kangas, 30.10.2009 Kauhava, Finland

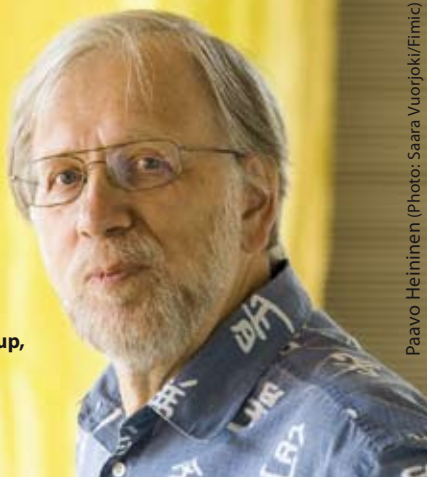


Photo: Saara Vuorjoki/Fimic

Enthusiastic response to Aho's explosive Minea

Kalevi Aho may well be the most important Finnish composer since Sibelius. ... Minea skilfully exploits the full firepower of the symphony orchestra, which is to say that, at its summit, it is jet-engine loud. ...The Song of the Nightingale by Stravinsky and the Suite from Richard Strauss' Der Rosenkavalier completed the evening's trio of showpieces. Beside Aho, they seemed a bit tame.

Star Tribune 6.11. / Ann Marsden

Thursday's concert featured something totally fresh, the world premiere of Minea. Built upon a foundation of Indian and Arab rhythms drummed out on a plethora of percussion instruments, it's a work of gathering menace and explosive release.

TwinCities.com Pioneer Press 6.11. / Rob Hubbard

Kalevi Aho: Minea

World Premiere: Minnesota Orchestra, cond. Osmo Vänskä, 5.11.2009 Minneapolis, U.S.A.



Photo: Maarit Kyttöharju/Fimic

Jyrki Linjama's soulful meditations

The evening's premiere, Jyrki Linjama's Allerheiligentag II with its six meditations, constituted a homogeneous musical reflection examined in different ways. ...In its deliberate open-mindedness Linjama's work called to mind the music of grandfather Linjama.

Keskisuomalainen 29.10. / Helvi Kangas

Jyrki Linjama: Allerheiligentag II

World Premiere: Sinfonia Finlandia Jyväskylä, cond. Tibor Bogányi, 28.10.2009 Jyväskylä, Finland



Photo: Saara Vuorjoki/Fimic

Rautavaara's House of the Sun

...A mystical journey in time revolving round a tragicomic present and a fabulous past. The poetic-ironic libretto provides important information and humour. ...It is easy to surrender to Rautavaara's refined, decadent flow of melody and timbre.

Helsingin Sanomat 17.10. / Hannu-Ilari Lampila

Einojuhani Rautavaara: The House of the Sun, chamber opera in two acts

Joint Sibelius Academy & University of Texas production, cond. Markus Lehtinen, dir. Vilppu Kiljunen, sol. Marjukka Tepponen, Megan Heath, Vikke Häkkinen etc., 14.10.2009 Järvenpää, Finland



Maija Skille, Vikke Häkkinen and Soo-Ah Park in *The House of the Sun*
(Photo: Rami Talja/Sibelius-Adacemy)

Powerful experience with magic moments

The Moon Concerto makes a strong dramatic impression. ...The operatic quality also leaves its mark on the overall form of the concerto. ...There is a magic moment at the beginning of the finale when Dowland's Galliard is heard first on the piano, as the vocal melody gradually weaves round its harmonies and the harp makes the whole orchestra part of the musical texture.

Turun Sanomat 25.9. / Eero Linjama

The Moon Concerto is an example of Heiniö's skilful, complex composition technique packed with allusions.

Helsingin Sanomat 25.9. / Hannu-Ilari Lampila

Mikko Heiniö: Moon Concerto (Piano Concerto No. 8)

World Premiere: Finnish RSO, cond. Santtu Rouvali, sol. Heini Kärkkäinen, piano, Monica Groop, mezzo-soprano, 23.9.2009 Helsinki, Finland

Puumala work sweeps the listener along

The listeners were swept along from the very beginning. Puumala's Memorial Fragment literally placed the audience in the centre of events. ...The dazzling work came across as icy, brittle echoes... The breathtakingly quiet moments were what carried the work along.

Keskipohjalainen 13.11. / Inkeri Tuikka

Veli-Matti Puumala: Memorial Fragment

Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra, cond. Juha Kangas, 11.11.2009 Oulu, Finland

Photo: Saara Vuorjoki/Fimic

Time stood still

This was music that you could not quite resist, even though it was many times downright brutal in its inexorability. Notwithstanding the conductor's slow basic tempo, he was not only able to keep together all the varied parts of the symphony, but he also brought about the magical effect of getting time to stand still. The symphony was a whole world of its own in which the listener could linger for a while without reservations and demands.

Helsingborgs Dagblad 23.10. / Henrik Halvarson

Allan Pettersson: Symphony No. 7

Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra, cond. Tobias Ringborg, 22.10.2009 Helsingborg, Sweden

Sensual and mysterious Samuelsson

With a web of fragmentary starts, the orchestra builds a windy, musically varied landscape where the French horn player wanders around... The music's sensual qualities, in combination with its mysterious atmosphere, give the concerto a special, almost unreal character.

Svenska Dagbladet 12.10. / Lars Hedblad

Marie Samuelsson: The Horn in the Wind

World Premiere: Swedish Wind Ensemble, cond. Staffan Larsson, sol. Sören Hermansson, horn, 10.10.2009 Stockholm, Sweden

Dixit Dominus

This section was very suggestively composed, with dark, accusing string sonorities, and it created a striking and frightening mood inside the space of the church. It was assertive music full of power and energy that was hard to resist. But Jennefelt's main message is, after all, peace and reconciliation, and in the final words of the concert the Harmony of Voices sang sweetly: Lord have mercy, and peace on earth...

Smålandsposten 8.11. / Axel Lindhe

Thomas Jennefelt: Dixit Dominus

Musica Vitae, Harmony of Voices, cond. Fredrik Malmberg, 7.11.2009 Tingsryd, Sweden



Photo: Siri Jennefelt

Schnelzer's music teems with life

The orchestra interpreted the translucent sonority of the work superbly. In continually changing, precisely executed time signatures the music was all the while teeming with life and excitement.

Uppsala Nya Tidning 9.10. / Anders Bragesjö

Albert Schnelzer: A Freak in Burbank

Uppsala Chamber Orchestra, cond. Shi Yeon Sung, 8.10.2009 Uppsala, Sweden



Ann-Kristin Jones as Goya's wife, Josefa (Photo: Mats Bäcker)

Börtz's Goya – a memory for life

Something exciting happens in the transparent element, in those moments when the music becomes, as it were, immobile and the development frozen. When the song can soar out into chamber-music, airy visions of solitude and wistful dreams of beauty...

GöteborgsPosten 28.9. / Magnus Haglund

There are a number of excellent portraits here, especially of the women around Goya... And, of course, of Goya himself, powerfully interpreted by baritone Anders Larsson.

Dagens Nyheter 29.9. / Martin Nyström

Daniel Börtz's music opens up like a flower... And when Josefa recalls her dead children with tones that give an inkling of the presence of a muse, we in the audience get a memory for life.

Svenska Dagbladet 28.9. / Carl-Gunnar Åhlén

Daniel Börtz: Goya, opera in two acts

World Premiere: The Göteborg Opera, cond. Joakim Ulander, sol. Anders Larsson, Michael Weinius, Ann-Kristin Jones, Katarina Giotas etc., 26.9.2009 Gothenburg, Sweden



Anders Paulsson (Photo: Bengt-Åke Persson)

Eliasson's fascinating concerto

The whole piece is permeated by a flow that just goes straight through. The soloist takes the listener on a journey where you just have to follow along, whether you want to or not. It is bold and fascinating in some sections, while calm and melodic in others. The interplay between orchestra and soloist almost takes the audience's breath away. This is artistry and virtuosity of the highest calibre.

Norrländska Socialdemokraten 28.9. / Johan E. Skoglund

Anders Eliasson: Concerto for Saxophone and String Orchestra

Norrbottn Chamber Orchestra, cond. Eva Ollikainen, sol. Anders Paulsson, 27.9.2009 Piteå, Sweden