



Photo: Jesper Berg

Jeroen Berwaerts and Håkan Hardenberger

Broström's Nigredo

The composer evinces an eminent talent when it comes to handling timbre... he keeps the percussion busy creating a soft swarming atmosphere, together with the harp, the piano and the whole multifarious orchestra's web of parts. The soloists liberate themselves from this fantastic throng to excel, while the amazing secrets of trumpet technique crop out in duels and bickerings. Otherwise, images predominate of the impressionistic tone painting of wide oceans. And Broström is lord of the waves. *Sydsvenskan* 15.3.

Tobias Broström: Nigredo

World premiere: Malmö SO/John Storgårds, sol. Håkan Hardenberger, Jeroen Berwaerts, trumpets, 14.3.2019 Malmö, Sweden

Högberg's entertaining Baboon Concerto

The soloist told stories, blew smoke rings through the instrument, distorted the composer's melodies and gradually took his instrument apart piece by piece, until at last only the pipe was left... A work with so many comical gimmicks requires a performer who not only masters the virtuosic passages on the instrument, but also dares to loosen up in the theatrical features inserted in the score. Sebastian Stevansson is such an entertainer – he obviously enjoyed his role as the baboon, who cunningly stole the show from the highly competent conductor Susanna Mälkki.

Jyllands-Posten 1.3.

Fredrik Högberg: Baboon Concerto

Danish premiere: Danish National SO/Susanna Mälkki, sol. Sebastian Stevansson, bassoon, 28.2.2019 Copenhagen, Denmark

Wennäkoski's Soie the highlight of the evening

Lotta Wennäkoski's extremely virtuosic concerto was the highlight of the evening. Atmospheric poetry, refined instrumentation, rich handling of detail and sovereign play with the orchestra's timbral potential – astounding and impressive... Kersten McCall places his outstanding competence in the service of the work. This is great art, free from the airs and graces of stardom. *Westfälischen Anzeiger* 25.3.

Lotta Wennäkoski: Soie

Concertgebouw Orchestra/Thomas Hengelbrock, sol. Kersten McCall, flute, 22.3.2019 Dortmund, Germany

Finesse and radiance

The guitar concerto *Susurrus* by Lotta Wennäkoski is distinguished by the finesse and invention of a score in which the orchestra becomes the sound box for the guitar. The energy of the solo part and the novel ideas give an instrument so difficult to confront with an orchestra an astonishing radiance. *resmusica.com* 11.5.

Lotta Wennäkoski: Susurrus

Estonian National SO/Olari Elts, sol. Petri Kumela, 3.5.2019 Tallinn, Estonia (World Music Days)



Albert Schnelzer & Ilya Gringolts

Nocturnal Songs

In *Nocturnal Songs* the common denominator for the inspiration is a state in-between wakefulness and sleep... an exceedingly successful work that received standing ovations... Ilya Gringolts gave an assured and moving performance. *Upsala Nya Tidning* 13.4.

Albert Schnelzer: Violin Concerto – Nocturnal Songs

World premiere: Uppsala CO/Gérard Korsten, sol. Ilya Gringolts, 11.4.2019 Uppsala, Sweden

Schnelzer's sure-fire hit

A modern piano concerto that feels like a sure-fire hit the very first time you hear it... He has a tone language that is up-to-date but not too complicated, with colourful orchestration... Above all, he has something to tell... Conrad Tao performs splendidly, and the orchestra and the conductor Søndergård seem equally inspired. This is a piano concerto that deserves to be performed many times and recorded on CD as soon as possible. *Dagens Nyheter* 15.3.

Albert Schnelzer: Piano Concerto – This is Your Kingdom

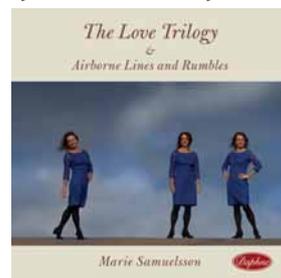
World premiere: Swedish Radio SO/Thomas Søndergård, sol. Conrad Tao, 14.3.2019 Stockholm, Sweden

Striking beauty and delicacy

Katija Dragojevic's passionate voice can be heard in longspun melodic lines... The beauty is striking when she succeeds in getting this first part to rise like a slowly emerging protuberance of land out of the sea, and there fill the air with archaic sounds high up in the treble register... In the second part the pulse is much quicker and the mobility almost boundless. A jubilant feeling that Andreas Sundén emits on his clarinet... In the third part Samuelsson has chosen to be at her most searching, and delicacy permeates the whole movement, including achingly beautiful string and wind parts. *Dagens Nyheter* 21.3.

Marie Samuelsson: The Love Trilogy

CD: Swedish Radio SO/Daniel Blendulf, Malmö SO, Nordic CO/Sarah Ioannides, sol. Katija Dragojevic, mezzo-soprano, Andreas Sundén, clarinet (Daphne 1062)



Symphony No. 17 – an Aho masterpiece

Kalevi Aho's *Symphony No. 17* is a modern masterpiece... It is one of the finest, most impressive works of art ever produced in this country or that I have come across anywhere for a long time now. The greatest music is never an honour just to the composer or the style he represents; it is something that exists for the listener, making his soul and innermost being shiver... Aho's symphony arouses a feeling such as this – wonder, astonishment, emotion. *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat* 6.4.

Kalevi Aho: Symphony No. 17

World premiere: Lahti SO/Dima Slobodeniouk, 4.4.2019 Lahti, Finland

Ever innovative Aho

Possibly Aho's greatest feat, triumphant as ever in these works, is a truly unique harmonic compromise between atonality, free tonality and tonality – a sort of 'Ahotonality'. *Hufvudstadsbladet* 24.4.

Kalevi Aho: Trumpet Concerto, Trombone Concerto

CD: Antwerp SO/Martyn Brabbins, sol. Jörgen van Rijen, trombone, Alain de Rudder, trumpet (BIS SACD-2196)

Gripping new Guitar Concerto

The seven-movement work traced an almost cinematic arc in which different effects intertwine as part of a growing story...the magnificent result kept the audience gripped to the very last note. *Lapin kansa* 13.5.

Kalevi Aho: Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra

Lapland CO/John Storgårds, sol. Ismo Eskelinen, 10.5.2019 Rovaniemi, Finland



Photo: Roman Etienne

A resonant, glowing song cycle

Heiniö uses resonant, spectral-led harmonies to set Nummi's tender characters to music... The cycle, both its poetry and its mood, fits the meditative, dark basic hue of the deep bass voice. *Song of Late Summer*, though melancholy, nevertheless glows. *yle.fi* 12.3.

Mikko Heiniö: Syyskesän laulu (Song of Late Summer)

CD: Sami Luttinen, bass, Tuula Hällström, piano (Alba ABCD 427)



Photo: Mats Lundqvist

Haglund Festival

The *Symphony* stands out as a spiritual monolith, a pillar of wisdom that radiates in shifting colours, vibrates, breathes, perhaps even consoles. The music, with features of voluptuous melancholy, forms a slow, hesitant flow where impulses and ideas succeed one another. *Svenska Dagbladet* 1.4.

In the violin concerto "Hymnen an die Nacht"... the soloist becomes the subject that seems to howl in the musically austere moonlight... until the day dawns and "the hour of the wolf" passes into a more elegiac tranquility... "La rosa profunda" is about life's frailty viewed through the transitoriness of the rose. It is sensual, shimmering music, fervently conveyed by the soprano Miah Persson. *Dagens Nyheter* 29.3.

Tommie Haglund: Symphony (World premiere), Hymnen an die Nacht, La Rosa Profunda

Royal Stockholm PO/Tobias Ringborg, sol. Ilya Gringolts, violin, Miah Persson, soprano, 28.3.2019 Stockholm, Sweden (Stockholm Composer Weekend)

Captivating music

The Sea Lapland String Quartet conjured forth Nieminen's atonal yet melodic texture with a bold spatiality... The enchanting thematic repetitions and spatial echoes engulf the mind and captivate one to listen. *Lapin kansa* 4.3.



Kai Nieminen: Gestures of Winter (Three Quartets of Winter)

CD: Sea Lapland String Quartet (Pifink JJVC-204)

A work just begging to be played

It is obvious from Somber that Tuomas Turriago is a first-class pianist. A work of smoothly changing tempos, rhythms and tonal richness, it tastes strongly of jazz in addition to impressionistic shades. A work just begging to be played! *Aamulehti* 7.3.

Tuomas Turriago: Somber for Piano Solo

World premiere: Ville Hautakangas, 6.3.2019 Tampere, Finland



Photo: Nea Ilmerä