

NORDIC

HIGHLIGHTS

3/2019

NEWSLETTER FROM GEHRMANS MUSIKFÖRLAG & FENNICA GEHRMAN

Sven-David Sandström in memoriam

Focus on Jyrki Linjama
Olli Kortekangas' Pictures of Life



PHOTO: MIKKO KAUPPINEN

Mikko Heiniö commissions

The University of Turku has commissioned **Mikko Heiniö** to compose a work for its centenary celebrations in 2020. Titled *Syvyyden yllä tuuli* (*Wind above the Depths*), it will be premiered in February 2020 and at the degree ceremony in May. The cantata is scored for baritone, mixed choir and orchestra and will be performed by the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra and the Turku University Choir.

Heiniö has also written a work for The Polytech Choir, to be performed as part of the choir's 120th anniversary in spring 2020. Titled *Täällä, kaikkialla* (*Here, Everywhere*), it is based on poems by **Juha Vakkuri** (1946-2019), author and founder of the Villa Karo, the Finnish-African Cultural Centre in Benin, West Africa.

The Finnish Music Publishers Association chose Mikko Heiniö as Classical Composer of the Year.

Heininen Violin Sonatas on disc

Kaija Saarikettu and **Juhani Lagerspetz** have recorded the *Violin Sonatas* by **Paavo Heininen** on the Alba label. Released in May, the disc contains the three *Boston Sonatas*, Op. 134 published by Fennica Gehrman in spring 2019. The sonatas were composed as a commission from Boston that expanded into a set of three works in which the ideas in one work are developed and build up to a climax in the others.

Bäck and Johanson centenaries

This autumn we are celebrating the centenaries of two distinctive profiles of Swedish music, **Sven-Erik Bäck** (1919-1994) and **Sven-Eric Johanson** (1919-1997). They were central figures of the radical Monday Group founded in the 40s, together with **Karl-Birger Blomdahl**, **Ingvar Lidholm**, **Eric Ericson** et al. Bäck and Johanson were both very prolific, with works ranging from opera to orchestral and chamber music, but perhaps they are best known and loved

for their works for choir which are today considered classics in Swedish choral repertoire. Among their most well-known works are Bäck's *Motets for the Church Year* 🎧, and Johanson's *Fancies* 🎧, 9 pieces for mixed choir and piano to texts from various Shakespeare plays. Bäck and Johanson are being celebrated with anniversary concerts during this autumn by the Eric Ericson Chamber Choir, the Gothenburg Chamber Choir, the Esoterics in Seattle etc.



PHOTO: HANS OLA ERICSON

Sven-Erik Bäck

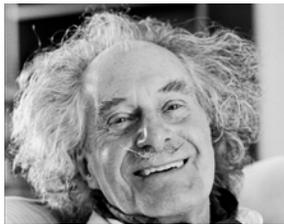


PHOTO: INGEMAR JERNBERG

Sven-Eric Johanson

Concert Overture by Sibelius rediscovered

Fennica Gehrman has signed a publishing agreement for a *Concert Overture* by Sibelius. Based on material found while studying the manuscript of the opera *The Maiden in the Tower*, it was discovered by the conductor **Tuomas Hannikainen**, following references made by Sibelius himself. A significant work that, according to Hannikainen, stands up well on its own, it lasts 11–12 minutes and was conducted by Sibelius at concerts of his works in Turku. The score is scheduled for publication in autumn 2019.

New Rangström anthology

"Ture Rangström Collected Songs" is the most comprehensive and critical edition of Rangström's vocal works thus far. The editor **Anders Annerholm** has selected 49 songs – complete cycles, as well as separate songs, among which some have not been previously published. The preface is in English and many of the texts also have German translations. **Ture Rangström** (1884-1947) was one of Sweden's most prominent composers of 'Lieder' and composed some 250 songs.



Anders Annerholm & Ture Rangström Jr.

Whittall & The Carice Singers



PHOTO: MARIIT KYÖHÄRÄ

The Carice Singers have appointed **Matthew Whittall** Associate Composer. "I'm thrilled to begin this relationship with The Carice Singers," he says. "Their fresh, pure, youthful sound is hugely inspiring for a composer, and their varied and sensitive programming takes listeners on journeys that forge poetic links across nations and centuries. To get to write a large-scale piece for such a front-rank ensemble is a dream come true!" The Carice Singers are a British vocal ensemble of young professional singers conducted by **George Parris**.

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Sound samples 🎧, video clips 📺 and other material are available at

www.gehrmans.se/highlights
www.fennicagehrman.fi/highlights

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Cecilia Damström premieres

Cecilia Damström is looking ahead at a busy season. 17 October will see the world premiere of her fairy tale opera, *Vickan & Väinö*, at the Alexandre theatre in Helsinki. In November the female voice choir Lyran will premiere *Requiem for Our Earth*, a 30-minute work about global warming. The orchestral work *Tundo! (Knock!)* 🎧, dedicated to all refugees in the world, will receive its Finnish premiere on 5 December by the Kuopio Symphony Orchestra conducted by **Jaakko Kuusisto**, and **Christian Reif** will conduct the US premiere of the same work with the Colorado Springs Philharmonic on 22 February.



PHOTO: MARTE VEJAN



PHOTO: TIANI KUUL

Erkki-Sven Tüür at 60

Erkki-Sven Tüür will be 60 on 16 October. His composing career started in the late 1980s and the early works still popular today include *Zeitraum*, the *Architectonics* series and *Action-Passion-Illusion* for strings. In his own words, his pieces are abstract dramas in sound, with an extremely dynamic chain of events. Since 1992, Tüür has been a freelance composer who has received commissions from renowned performers worldwide. He has been especially prolific in writing orchestral works and concertos, but his catalogue also includes chamber music, choral works and an opera.

Marie Samuelsson's Double Concerto

Marie Samuelsson has composed a double concerto for violin, guitar and orchestra titled *Brandnäva*. The title refers to a plant (*Geranium lanuginosum*) with blue or purple flowers whose seeds grow only if they are heated to 50°C or more, as for example after a forest fire. Like the phoenix, the flower rises from the ashes. The concerto was commissioned on the initiative of conductor **Christian Karlsen** and guitarist **Jacob Kellermann**, who will premiere it together with violinist **Catharina Chen** and the Gävle Symphony Orchestra on 8 November.



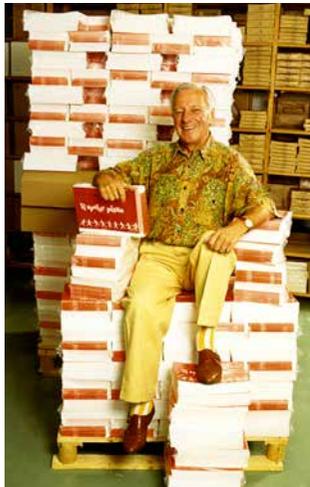
PHOTO: JOSEF DOUKAL

Concert in memory of Järnefelt

The Royal Swedish Orchestra will give a concert dedicated to the composer and conductor **Armas Järnefelt** at the Royal Swedish Opera on 29 November. Järnefelt's talent and gift for composing both orchestral and choral works made him a popular conductor throughout Europe. Born in Finland, he worked at the Royal Swedish Opera between 1907 and 1932, the last five years as Chief Conductor. The concert programme includes his *Berceuse*, *Suite for Small Orchestra* and *Miranda*, conducted by **Emil Eliasson**.

Carl-Bertil Agnestic 1924-2019

Pedagogue, composer and choir leader **Carl-Bertil Agnestic** has passed away at the age of 95. We remember him as an innovative pioneer in Swedish music pedagogy. He had his breakthrough with the piano school "Vi spelar piano" (We Play the Piano), which was first published in 1958 and has sold more than 700,000 copies. After his success with the piano book he wrote a number of tutorials for various instruments, but also for choral singing. In 2005 he received the Swedish Music Publishers' Lifetime Achievement Award.



Music by Aho and Nordgren in the Far East

Chamber music by **Kalevi Aho** is to be performed at the Seoul International Music Festival in Korea on 4 November 2019. This will be followed a week later by the premiere of *Mysterium* in Tokyo on 12 November. The pianist in this quintet for the left hand and string quartet will be **Izumi Tateno**, who has also performed the concerto for the left hand by **Pehr Henrik Nordgren** (1944-2008) in Japan several times this year. 2019 marks the 75th anniversary of Nordgren's birth.



Pehr Henrik Nordgren



Kalevi Aho

PHOTO: MUSIC FINLAND, LAHTI SYMPHONY

New catalogue

Gehrmans Musikförlag has acquired the Edition Reimers catalogue. The Reimers publishing house was founded by **Lennart Reimers** in 1975 and the catalogue contains works by some of the foremost Swedish composers, including **Karin Rehnqvist**, **Henrik Strindberg**, **Anders Eliasson**, **Mats Larsson Gothe**, **Arne Mellnäs**, **Folke Rabe**, **Jan W. Morthenson**, et al.

Rising Star Magnus Holmänder plays Martinsson and Staern

Clarinetist **Magnus Holmänder** is one of the European Concert Hall Organisation ECHO's Rising Stars for the 2019/2020 season. On his tour to 12 of Europe's major concert halls he is bringing **Rolf Martinsson's** *Suite Fantastique*, a version for clarinet and piano of Martinsson's clarinet concerto *Concert Fantastique*. He will also premiere **Benjamin Staern's** brand new *Scherzo assurdo* at Mozarteum in Salzburg on 5 November. Accompanying Holmänder on his tour is pianist **David Huang**.



PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER HÄSTBACKA

PREMIERES

October-December 2019

TINA ANDERSSON

Plant a Tree
The Vocal Ensemble VoNo/Lone Larsen.
5.10. Gothenburg, Sweden

KALEVI AHO

Solo XIV for clarinet
Simon Reitmaier. 12.11. Innsbruck, Austria

Mysterium (Quintet for strings and left hand piano)
Tateno Quartet, Izumi Tateno, piano. 12.11. Tokyo, Japan

KAI NIEMINEN

In Broken Reflections - Through Times, Scapes and Mirrors
Zagros Ensemble, Tommi Hyytinen, horn
14.10. Helsinki, Finland

CECILIA DAMSTRÖM

Vickan & Väinö (Children's opera)
Opera Box, Hedvig Paulig, soprano, Ville Salonen, tenor, Markus Nieminen, baritone, Janne Valkeajoki, accordion
17.10. Helsinki, Finland

Requiem for our Earth
Lyran Female Voice Choir/Jutta Seppinen
7.11. Espoo, Finland

ALBERT SCHNELZER

Apollonian Dances (version for percussion and string orchestra)
O/Modernt CO/Hugo Ticciati, sol. Evelyn Glennie
18.10. London, UK

Burn My Letters - Remembering Clara
Gävle SO/Jaime Martin. 29.11. Gävle, Sweden

CARL UNANDER SCHARIN

The Cloud of Unknowing for mixed choir and organ
Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble, Markus Wargh, organ
26.10. Luleå, Sweden

OLLE LINDBERG

A Requiem for the Living for soprano, baritone, mixed choir, brass quintet and piano
Adolf Fredrik Chamber Choir/Christoffer Holgersson, sol. Agnes Englund Lindberg, soprano, Staffan Liljas, baritone. 2.11. Stockholm, Sweden

SVEN-DAVID SANDSTRÖM

Seventeenth Century Nun's Prayer
Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir/Mogens Dahl
3.11. Copenhagen, Denmark

BENJAMIN STAERN

Scherzo assurdo
Magnus Holmänder, clarinet, David Huang, piano
5.11. Salzburg, Austria

MARIE SAMUELSSON

Brandnäva - Concerto for violin, guitar and orchestra
Gävle SO/Christian Karlsen, sol. Catharina Chen, violin, Jacob Kellermann, guitar. 8.11. Gävle, Sweden

MATTHEW WHITTALL

String Quartet
Meta4. 15.11. Espoo, Finland

Night, sleep, death and the stars

Jussi Särkkä, bassoon, Kaisa Kortelainen, harp, Sivan Magen, harp, Jouko Laivuori, piano
24.11. Helsinki, Finland

OLLI KORTEKANGAS

Luotujen virsi (Missa brevis) for children's choir and instruments. Various choirs from Helsinki/Anna Nora
16.11. Helsinki, Finland

Sonata da chiesa for organ and chamber orchestra
Andante CO/Ari Hirvonen, Kari Vuola, organ
8.12. Uusikaupunki, Finland

JYRKI LINJAMA

Himmeä, kirkas, himmeä...
Aarne Pelkonen, baritone, Juho Alakärppä, piano
22.11. Helsinki, Finland

JONAS VALFRIDSSON

Five Aspects of Broken Promises for seven instruments
Musicians from Dalasinfoniettan. 22.11. Borlänge, Sweden

Sven-David Sandström (1942-2019), one of Scandinavia's most beloved composers, passed away on 10 June at the age of 76. He composed till his very last breath, and many pieces are yet to be premiered.



PHOTOS FROM LEFT: HANS EKSTEN, ENAR MERTEL RYDBERG, MATS BACKER

"There is a creativity within me that I can't stop. It just gushes out of me".

That is how Sven-David Sandström described his exceptional productivity in his very last public appearance – in the talk show "Summer", that posthumously reached hundreds of thousands of Swedish radio listeners. Even in the last year of his life, during the period of his grave illness when he was often bedridden, music continued to flow from his pen. He finished his most extensive opera, *The Book*, based on Niklas Rådström's visionary and dramatised rendering of the Biblical books. At the same time he put the final touches to his oratorio *Uppbrott* (Breaking Up) and still managed to compose some music for a grandchild who played the double bass.

Unrestrainable creativity

His production would number at least five hundred works, perhaps nearly six hundred. Sandström had lost count long ago. And the question is whether he ever included any of the compositions he had written for the desk drawer back home in Borensberg where he grew up. It was not until he was 26 years old that he began studies in the composition class at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm. Ingvär Lidholm was his teacher, and guest professors György Ligeti and Per Nørgård contributed important impulses.

Sven-David Sandström would himself come to be a charismatic and influential mentor for several generations of composers. First as a composition professor at the Royal College of Music (1985-95), later at Indiana University in Bloomington, USA (1999-2008). But also at colleges in Ingesund and Falun, as well as at the Gotland School for Music Composition, which he helped to found.

Considering Sandström's full-time position as a dynamic pedagogue over several decades, his enormous catalogue of works seems even more remarkable. The explanation is not just his unrestrainable creativity but also a discipline of compositional craft combined with a spontaneity in giving form to music. His diligence – up early in the mornings, never wasting a free moment that could be used for composition – he claims was inherited from his father, master watchmaker Sven Sandström. From his pious free church home in Östergötland he acquired a religious faith that he would maintain throughout his life. An existential security that made possible Sven-David Sandström's many seemingly headstrong aesthetic choices; in reality an expression of his increasing need for artistic freedom.

International renown

In 1972 he had his breakthrough with the orchestral work *Through and Through*, conducted by Herbert Blomstedt. Pierre Boulez soon took an interest and commissioned *Utmost*, which he premiered with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. The doors were thus opened to Europe and international renown. But

Sven-David Sandström in memoriam

Sven-David Sandström would instead diverge from the modernistic mainstream of art music. An inner resistance to setting music to texts vanished. To his mind, a composer is able to hide his feelings without a text, and he was referring to a hitherto suppressed need for emotional expression.

With his interest in texts followed a focus on vocal music. Especially for choir – which Sandström was familiar with and knew from the inside in his capacity as a member of the Hågersten Motet Choir. Around 1980 a number of major choral works appeared. Sacred a cappella music such as *Agnus Dei* and *A New Heaven and a New Earth* would quickly become in demand from choirs the world over. His monumental and violently dramatic Requiem *De ur alla minnen fallna* (Mute the Bereaved Memories Speak) from 1982 struck down like a bomb with a scope far beyond the narrow bounds of art music; it was awarded the Nordic Council's Music Prize.

By now Sven-David Sandström had also liberated himself from the often dogmatic modern music community of that period. A collaboration with the young, eccentric choreographer Per Jonsson would give birth to a number of orchestral works; gestural in design and free in form. Opera – a no-go-zone for his generation – aroused his interest. Both the chamber opera *Emperor Jones* and the large-scale children's opera *The White Castle* were staged at the Royal Swedish Opera.

Romanticism and Baroque

In 1985 Sandström entered on his post as professor of composition at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, which did not involve any decline in the continually swelling catalogue of works. He came to develop his need for emotional expression in a new kind of instrumental music: romantic and not seldom lively and virtuosic. Many orthodox modernists were shocked by Sven-David Sandström's tonally coloured palette, adorned with ornamental garlands, in his Neo-

Romantic piano music from the years around 1990. His explanation for this was that he had a recently acquired curiosity about the Late-Romantic heritage and a fascination for the proficiency of musicians.

At the same time he began to approach Baroque church music – motets, passions, etc. – in order to, as he said, join in a great tradition. He took up Purcell's *Hear My Prayer*, let it collapse and built it up again from fragments – a choral work that would come to be sung the world over. But it was Bach who was his great model and mentor. A seminal work was his grandiose *High Mass* (1994), which followed exactly the division of movements in Bach's Mass in B minor, but with Stravinsky-coloured rhythms. Once again Sandström caused a music-aesthetic debate, but *High Mass* was given an enthusiastic reception by audiences and critics alike. He himself considered the work to be his very best.

He would develop his knowledge of Bach in a series of works where he "borrowed" the text and the form, but not the tone language. He eventually felt called upon to follow Bach's work obligation – to continually provide new music for all feast days of the church year. In 2008 Sven-David Sandström began a unique project together with Stockholm Cathedral and a suburban church in Hässelby. For a period of three years choristers had to learn to sing from pages where the ink had barely dried for *High Mass* on Sundays. It amounted to a complete collection of music for all sixty-six feast days of the ecclesiastical year.

Sven-David Sandström challenged himself also in other genres. He composed a clarinet concerto, *Soft Music*, for the jazz virtuoso Putte Wickman and his *Third Symphony*, which featured vocal sections, for the musical theatre artist Helen Sjöholm. His interest in other kinds of voices than those with classical schooling was a driving force in Sandström's thinking when it came to the opera *Staden* (*The Town*), set to the poet Katarina Frostensson's lyrical and abstract libretto. Ten years later, in 2008, it was time for yet another big Sandström premiere at the Royal Swedish Opera: *Bathsheba* – this time with a text in English after a novel by Torgny Lindgren.

And after ten more years came Sven-David Sandström's most extensive work and final opus. An epic opera of Wagnerian proportions, written purely for the sake of creative pleasure. There was no commission behind the vast compositional labour that went into "The Book". This opera is the richest gift imaginable that Sandström could bequeath to posterity.



PHOTO: ULLA MONTAN

CAMILLA LUNDBERG

Finnish composer Jyrki Linjama here talks about inspiring communities and composing modern church music. He likens the genesis of his works to patient gold panning. Music should, he says, defy time and stretch out to eternity.

Seven questions for Jyrki Linjama

1 Where do you find the ideas and inspiration for your music?

One important source is direct physical and auditive contact with the instrument. I try to listen and, as far as possible, play the instrument I'm composing for as much as I can. It's a method my teacher, **Einojuhani Rautavaara**, greatly encouraged.

I like composing vocal music and the contacts with poetry. Translating the words into musical meanings and symbols is an endlessly rich realm of experience and interpretation, both for the composer and for the listener. Language and music also have lots of structural and timbral things in common. These abound particularly if you have a sufficiently open and refined notion of language and have the vast wealth of material inherent in modern music at your disposal.

For me, music is also a natural way of belonging to an inspiring community in which all sorts of colleagues occupy a fundamental role: players, singers, conductors, to say nothing of theatre folk if your work involves opera and the stage. I do not subscribe to the 19th-century concept of the composer as a solitary hero: my work is possible only because people in our culture have been singing and playing, dancing and conducting rites for so long.

2 How would you describe your composition process and your musical language?

Jarmo Sermilä recently formed an anagram from my name: 'aj aj min lyrik!' [in Swedish, translate as 'oh oh my lyricism!']. It's a fitting one, because sensitivity, a veritable mimosa-like quality, has been like a red line running through my work. To counterbalance this, I seek aggressive tones and means of bridging these worlds. At the extremes in speaking of tonality I could mention white noise and the beginning of the chorale *Wachet auf*. I'm not greatly interested in such extremes or all in all getting stuck on a single point. The music of composers like **Alban Berg** and **Bent Sørensen** speaks to me, for it operates inventively across the whole wide field opened up between different perceptual extremes. My composition process is seeking the right field for the work in hand and the right path within it. Patient gold panning that is at worst tiresome and at best out-and-out rewarding.

3 How are spirituality and its various aspects manifest in your works – and how do you hope to put them across to the listener?

The Christian liturgy rests on a tremendous drama: a journey from darkness to light and the celebration of communion. The long Mass tradition has created a fine substrate for the entire Western concept of music. I find being part of this tradition fascinating, and in this sense I'm not even able to divide music into spiritual and secular. If the music is alive, it also

breathes. Music (like the liturgy) offers means of articulating the profoundest of questions with the greatest of sincerity: in so doing, it can have great collective significance.

We live in a time of ever-greater ecocatastrophe, of dwindling human trust and of selfishness. Against this background, I don't believe in the topicality of music; rather, it should defy time and stretch out to eternity. It should be critical and cause friction. This way, it may create the potential for true interaction that breathes, both horizontally and vertically. And hence for growth and change.

This being the case, the church should nowadays also be far more interested in good new music! I'm trying to promote dialogue between my profession and the church in the association for composers of church music we have founded.

4 Which of your works have a special meaning for you?

The cantus firmus [CF] melodies (Gregorian chant and the Protestant chorale) I use signify lots of things. The hymn in my *Veni redemptor gentium* for organ articulates the age-old Advent themes and aspects of arrival, from the timid groping of the beginning to the marked closing movement. The CF material in my *Sonata die chiesa* for piano sets the mood for each of the four movements. The first, *Miserere*, keeps on repeating the simple two lines of the Psalm. The twilight of the music lets in the light in the second movement (*Bells*) with a Gregorian Hallelujah melody. The light reaches its zenith in the quick texture of the third movement (CF *Veni Creator Spiritus*) and retreats into translucence in the polyphonic finale, the material of which is the German melody *Es sungen drei Engel*. In my new, second string quartet (*Allerheiligentag III*), the material is a Finnish folk chorale for All Saints' Day. I love combining an uncouth folk melody with a sophisticated composition technique and instrumentation. The finale is a funeral march, a long resignation from the sonorously rich timbres of the beginning to the great bleakness of the end.

5 Which instruments do you feel especially close to – and how are they reflected in your works?

I play the violin and have sung in choirs, my wife is a pianist and my children have experience of the French horn, Baroque violin and other instruments. Members of my extended family have been very active in church music, playing the organ and harpsichord. It is, I think, an advantage for a composer to have as direct and as concrete a relationship as possible with how things are actually going to sound. So the instruments I've quoted play a considerable role in my works.



PHOTO: MUSICEFINLAND/SARA VUORIKI

Being a violinist, I'm also interested in well-tempered Baroque tuning systems. In my *Sonata da chiesa* for harpsichord, for example, I enjoy the chance of using really pure fifths and (almost) pure thirds.

6 What book and record would you take with you to a desert island – and where would that be?

The book would be the Bible (the Vulgate version) and the record that made by the Tallis Scholars of the "*Sicut lilium*" motet and Mass and other things by Palestrina. The island would be in the Turku archipelago.

7 What compositions do you have in the pipeline?

I've started composing a solo violin work for **Kajja Saarikettu** and next summer's Kaustinen Chamber Music Festival. Kajja and I have a long history of working together and I'm really looking forward to the project. My song cycle *Himmeä, kirkas, himmeä...* (Bright, Dusky, Bright: settings of poems by **Eeva-Liisa Manner**) is to be premiered at the Helsinki Lied Festival in November. The musical quality of the texts appeals to me, and the poems I've chosen mention two composers: Vogelweide and Bruckner. Manner is a modern Finnish classic, and addition to being structurally strong, her texts have a clarity, a sacred feel and a richness of content I greatly value. My church opera *Kolme kirjettä Laestadiukselle* (Three Letters to Laestadius) is to be performed in Oulu Cathedral in October, and it's nice to have it performed at the very heart of the region where **Lars Levi Laestadius** founded his Pietist revival movement.

I've got one more especially interesting project scheduled for next year. I've just finished a piece called *Via crucis*, 14 meditations for organ and the way of the cross. **Titta Tunkkari** is doing a solo choreography to my music. The project is also interesting in that it's my first contact as a composer with dance.

Last year I wrote my very first string quartets, nos. 1–3. The second, *Allerheiligentag III*, has just been premiered at the Kimito Island Music Festival, and the Zagros Quartet will be performing the first and third next summer.

HENNA SALMELA

REPERTOIRE TIPS

Music for percussion



KALEVI AHO

Sieidi (2010) Dur: 36'

Concerto for Solo Percussion and Orchestra:
3343-4331-03-str

Timpani Concerto (2015) Dur: 29'

3333-4331-02-hp-str

Symphony No. 11 (1997-98) Dur: 34'

for 6 solo percussionists and orchestra: 2322-3221-euph-str
Aho's shamanistic Sieidi has been hugely popular, having been performed some 70 times across the world. It is an extremely tasty and impressive showpiece, a sort of world music in which the soloist roams between the instruments.

The Timpani Concerto is a half-hour journey of shifting moods, firm handling of form and material well suited to the solo instrument. The third movement sets off a virtuosic display of rhythmic fireworks.

The 11th Symphony proceeds at times with almost Ravelian ecstasy and hypnotic energy. The wondrous last movement is tranquil, ritual-like music in which the percussions are used as 'sacred' instruments.



DANIEL BERG

Concertino for Marimba and Strings
(2017) Dur: 9'

Daniel Berg's elegant Concertino is composed for a virtuosic solo marimba and a less demanding, softly accompanying string texture, in classical style, but with distinct features of jazz harmony. The work is written to enable performances also by amateur orchestras together with a skillful soloist.



ERIK BERGMAN

Vision (1999) Dur: 12'

for solo percussion

On being requested by Keijo Puumalainen to compose this work, Bergman aimed at music using a battery of percussion instruments in a rich world of colours, timbres and rhythms. Vision opens with the faint chinking of the metal discs of a tambourine creating an ethereally sonorous sound world. Metal and membrane percussion instruments – 53 in all – later interact.



TOBIAS BROSTRÖM

Theatron (2014/15/17) Dur: 22'

for 2 percussion soloists and orchestra:
3233-4331-12-str or 2222-4231-12-pf-str or
wind orchestra: 2131-2332-12-pf-vc-db

The marimba and the vibraphone are central in this work. The first movement opens explosively and lets the solo parts play phrases that overlap like a string of pearls. The chorale-like, slow middle movement focuses on the lyrical timbres, while in the last movement, which starts out with an improvisatory call-and-response section, the tempo accelerates and the intensity gradually increases right up to the end.



PAAVO HEININEN

Sonatina (1996) Dur: 7'

for snare drum solo

Belline (1996) Dur: 3'

for tuned percussion (5 players)

These works belong to Op. 59, Points and Lines for Percussion, a collection of short compositions testing limits: things that are compositionally impossible – and most obviously possible. The Sonatina is, says Heininen, a 'gamble', an attempt to achieve a classical, though short, three-movement format by means of rhythm and dynamics alone. It can also be played with other sound material with a short resonance, either singly or in combination, hereby creating new tones. Belline can be performed on virtually any instrument.



MIKKO HEINIÖ

Khora (Piano Concerto No. 7) (2001)

Dur: 45'

Dance Images for Piano and Five Percussionists

Here the timpani and the percussion instruments combine with a piano, creating a sensual and hypnotic atmosphere. Khora was originally a dance work but can also be performed in a concert version. This is an example of Heiniö's innovative piano concertos – hybrids full of surprises, intelligence, fantasy and seductive appeal.



JACOB MÜHLRAD

Kata (2017) Dur: 8'

for percussion and two cellos

Mühlrad's Kata is inspired by the body movements in Japanese martial arts, so-called

"katas". The music fluctuates between rhythmic and meditative features, and is composed so as to give a visual impression with the choreographed movements of the percussion soloist (who plays on Thai gongs and vibraphones) in the foreground.



HANNU POHJANNORO

time exposures (2005) Dur: 16'

for percussion quartet

Pohjannoro's music is subtle, concentrated and full of rich details. This work addresses

questions of time and rhythm: even though clock time proceeds at an even pace, the listener's time does not necessarily. Instead of an endless chain of pulses, time may also be a space in which sounds are located.



MARIE SAMUELSSON

Air Drum III (2000) Dur: 5'

2222-2220-03-strings

In Marie Samuelsson's powerful and suggestive short piece, the three percussionists play

on air drums that sound like rumbling thunder, while the winds answer with jazzy rhythms. The flutes, followed closely by the orchestra's other parts, fly through the storm like birds in a flock. A brilliant concert opener that also works fine on stage with the spectacular drums beautifully illuminated in focus.



SVEN-DAVID SANDSTRÖM

Concert Pieces for Percussion and Orchestra (2002) Dur: 30'

for 6 percussion soloists and orchestra:

3333-4222-00-strings

This concerto was composed for the Kroumata percussion ensemble, and each of the six percussion parts was created with a specific Kroumata member's personality and ability in mind. The work consists of three movements, each presenting a group of percussion instruments; wooden, skin and metal. The work is at times extraordinary beautiful and romantic, but with contrasting passages that hit like a kick in the stomach.



BENJAMIN STAERN

Konnakol Variations (2019) Dur: 10'

for solo percussion and winds: 2262-a.

sax-t.sax-2431-11-0-db

In Staern's work the inspiration from Indian

'Konnakol' is especially evident in the first part where the soloist plays pattering, rapid figures on the congas and the bongos, while the orchestra marks the beat by hand-clapping. In the second part the soloist changes to metal and wood, creating a calm and meditative atmosphere. The expression shifts in the third part, becoming more aggressive, chasing and driving, with intense drumming in focus. The orchestral percussion latches on toward the end and duels with the soloist. It all leads up to a quiet, slightly mystical coda with a simple xylophone solo.

REVIEWS

Musica Kalevi Aho

Kalevi Aho's first string quartet (1971) provided a fascinating insight into the musical world of an 18-year-old... The third string quartet is Aho's undisputed masterpiece in the genre

Anneleen Lenaerts, solo harpist in the Vienna Philharmonic, has previously performed Aho's concerto for harp and cor anglais and the chamber concerto for harp and strings, Mearra. At this concert she did the expressive Mearra in a way that left virtually nothing to be desired.

Hufvudstadsbladet 1.7.

Kalevi Aho: String Quartets nos 1-3, Mearra for harp and string orchestra

Kamus Quartet, Concerto Málaga/Arturo

Alvarado, sol. Anneleen Lenaerts, harp

28.-29.6.2019 Forssa, Finland (Musica Kalevi Aho Festival)

Unique concerto

Loving the Beethoven may be routine, but this evening will long be remembered for the Aho.

Aho has always made a point of making a careful study of the instrument and the commissioner of a work. Tonight's was thus a unique combination: magnificent, guaranteed fresh Aho while at the same time strongly reflecting Raasakka's musician-personality covering everything from classical via contemporary to jazz and free improvisation. A rare solo instrument also won a host of new friends for its noble sound, and I wouldn't be at all surprised if the richly-colourful work became one of Aho's most frequently-performed worldwide.

Keskisuomalainen 5.9.

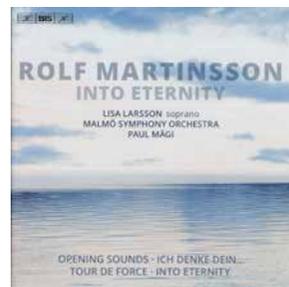
Kalevi Aho: Concerto for Bass Clarinet and Orchestra

World premiere: Jyväskylä Sinfonia/Ville Matvejeff, sol. Mikko Raasakka, 4.9.2019 Jyväskylä, Finland

Late Romantic, expressive, lasting

Eichendorff's Mondnacht is performed with a particular sensitivity, and the singer makes the moon shine with her purest voice. A brilliant achievement in a work whose expressiveness should actually make it a repertoire piece... Tour de Force is a highly dramatic, almost frightening work of about 10 minutes, very characteristic and in the surround sound of this Malmö recording extremely effective and impressive... At the end, this release must be described as very successful, with attractive and ambitious yet immediately accessible music.

Pizzicato 2.8.



Rolf Martinsson: Ich denke Dein... Tour de Force

CD: Malmö SO/

Paul Mägi, sol.

Lisa Larsson, soprano

(BIS-2323 'Into Eternity')

Wennäkoski Composer-in-Residence

Lotta Wennäkoski was an optimal Composer-in-Residence. Her output was viewed from many perspectives and the world premiere of Zeng and the duo Tocca for violin and harp hinted at a new, rhythm-based aesthetic direction.

Hufvudstadsbladet 3.8.

The violin and harp of Cecilia Zilliacus and Stephen Fitzpatrick met in the action-packed idiom. The intricate music flowed along, logical and elastic. Modernism at its best. Bravo!

Vasabladet 1.8.

Lotta Wennäkoski: Tocca for harp and violin, Zeng for recorder, percussion and strings

World premiere: Cecilia Zilliacus, violin, Stephen Fitzpatrick, harp, Ostrobothnian CO/Dalia Stasevska, sol. Anna Petrini, recorder, Antti Ohenoja, percussion, 25.&31.7.2019 Vaasa, Finland (Korsholm Music Festival)

Wennäkoski was awarded by the Finnish Music Publishers in September.



PHOTO: MIKKO KAUPPINEN

Intoxicating Broström at the Proms

His writing has an intoxicating allure: the first movement holds us in limbo, with flickering harps and uneasy brass; the second moves towards a cathartic, defiant burst of sound... I'd like to hear it again – and Broström is a name to watch.

The Times 26.7.

It's a masterpiece! Brooding beds of strings mix with soft pedalled vibraphone, as contemplative, overlapping trumpet lines echo out. The effect is very New York film noir, but a B-movie score this is not. Towards the end, rapid, mambo-style percussion hammers out the piece's driving finale.

The Prickle 26.7.

Tobias Broström: Nigredo: Dark Night of the Soul

UK premiere: BBC National Orchestra of Wales/Markus Stenz, sol. Håkan Hardenberger, Jeroen Berwaerts, trumpets, 25.7.2019 London, UK (BBC Proms)



Tobias Broström, Håkan Hardenberger and Jeroen Berwaerts in London

Stunningly beautiful Sandström

"Uppbrott" has fateful sonorities but doesn't focus on death as much as on life... The music is characterised by both seriousness and calm, and is throughout exceedingly beautiful.

Dagens Nyheter 17.6.

The beauty of the piece was stunning and moving. The Adolf Fredrik Church Chamber Choir filled the room with a fantastic, bright choral sound under the direction of Christoffer Holgersson.

Svenska Dagbladet 18.6.

Sven-David Sandström: Uppbrott (Breaking Up)

World premiere: Adolf Fredrik Chamber Choir and Orchestra/Christoffer Holgersson, sol. Hanna Husåhr, soprano, Olle Persson, baritone, 15.6.2019 Stockholm, Sweden



PHOTO: JAKK OLAVWEDIN

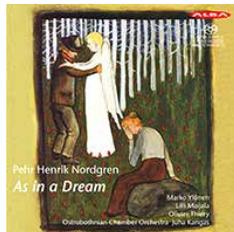
Daniel Börtz's Sinfonia 13

An exquisitely beautiful, quietly flowing Requiem: pretentious in its form and choice of subject, yet unpretentious in its way of letting the music subordinate itself to the caustic insights of the text... The impression that the composer carves out the words from the orchestra, as if he wanted to be sure that nothing is unnecessarily orchestrated, persists throughout the whole evening. Every bar feels carefully calculated and suited to the essence of the poem... Grief has rarely been depicted with such fervent beauty.

Svenska Dagbladet 27.5.

Daniel Börtz: Sinfonia 13

World premiere: Royal Stockholm PO/Patrik Ringborg, sol. Johanna Rudström, mezzo soprano, Daniel Carlsson, counter tenor, Karl-Magnus Fredriksson, baritone, Stina Ekdal, Hannes Meidal, reciters, 23.5.2019 Stockholm, Sweden



Pehr Henrik Nordgren: Concerto for Viola, Double Bass and Chamber Orchestra

CD: Ostrobothnian CO/Juha Kangas, sol. Lilli Maijala, viola, Olivier Thery, double bass (Alba 435)

Exciting and mysterious

The Concerto for Viola and Double Bass is one of the composer's most unusual. The soft-toned solo instruments produce some surprising combinations... the string orchestra is supplemented by a piano and percussions, the clinking and thudding beats of which create a ceremonial mood. It would be good to hear this exciting and mysterious work in concerts as well.

Rondo Classic 7-8/2019

Pictures of Life by Kortekangas – an opera of the highest rank

Elämänkuvat (Pictures of Life) demonstrates that Kortekangas is one of our highest-ranking opera composers... The audience gave it a standing ovation. Seldom does one experience a work in which the pieces are so well in place. The music drew out both bubbling joy and resignation tinged with melancholy, along with mystical allusions to the other world. The vocal parts are skilfully written, Kortekangas being thoroughly familiar with the human voice. Yet the ninth part, an orchestral intermezzo, made the biggest impression. No way is it just a filler; it is possibly the finest music by Kortekangas I have ever heard.

Helsingin Sanomat 3.8.

Pictures of Life absolutely deserves more performances. There would undoubtedly be a sufficient audience and interest. Kortekangas demonstrated a vast knowledge of the music of centuries past, as proved not least by the tremendous intermezzo in the middle of the opera.

Vasabladet 3.8.

The libretto by Pia Perkiö lets the different time perspectives meet in an emotionally touching way... Kortekangas is a wily opera fox who knows what will work on stage. Also, the music keeps to a simple but striking dramatic medium, expressive recitatives and harmonies that occasionally open up to tonality.

Hufvudstadsbladet 3.8.

Olli Kortekangas: Elämänkuvat (Pictures of Life, church opera)

World premiere: Vaasa & Seinäjoki Orchestras/Anna-Maria Helsing, Vaasa Opera Choir etc., sol. Päivi Nisula, soprano, Waltteri Torikka, baritone, 1.8.2019 Isokyrö, Finland (Korsholm Music Festival)



PHOTO: KORSHOLM MUSIC FESTIVAL/JOHANNA HAGSTRÖM

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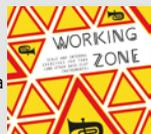
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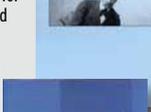
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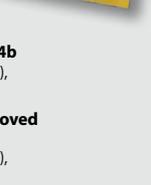


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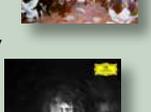
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