

Choral Highlights



MIKKO HEINIÖ Maria Suite (2011)

SATB a cappella

This new Heiniö work commissioned by the Key Ensemble looks at the Virgin Mary from fascinatingly different perspectives. The first two of the five songs are about the Black Madonna. The third alludes to Luther and has the hymn *Vom Himmel hoch* embedded in it. The fourth is based on a 13th century Stabat mater hymn, and the last draws on Orthodox motifs. GE ISMN 9790550111059



PEKKA JALKANEN Svjatyj Bozhe (Holy God) (2006)

SATB a cappella, Dur: 5'

This nostalgic, archaic-sounding work stylises its ethnic materials – the world of Russian *bylyny* and Ingrian laments – in the spirit of Orthodox church music. A little poem in Church Slavonic grows into a dusky choral fresco that stretches far and deep. FG ISMN 9790550095366



OLLI KORTEKANGAS The Way to the Woods (2007)

SATB a cappella, Dur: 7'30"

The words of this commission by the US Syracuse Vocal Ensemble and Robert Cowles are by Wendell Berry. Kortekangas is thoroughly familiar with his instrument, having sung in choirs throughout his youth, and knows how to write quality, sonorous music for it. He also has a knack of finding unusually beautiful texts for his works, as demonstrated by this profound poem by Berry. FG ISMN 9790550095779



SUSANNA LINDMARK Songs of Hope (2010)

SSAA a cappella
(percussion in the second song)

Susanna Lindmark leads the women's choir *Arctic Light* (Choir of the Year 2010). Her pieces often conjure up the atmosphere of northern, cold and barren areas, as in the two Songs of Hope; *In a Clear Cold Crystal Winter Night* and *Song of Hope*. Her own texts have a religious, but also human, undertone. GE 11818



EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA Unsere Liebe (1996/2010)

SATB a cappella

Settings of poems by Lassi Nummi translated into German. *Unsere Liebe* is both heart-warming and moving. Rautavaara experienced the poems as being extremely personal, acting as a source of inspiration for his music. *Unsere Liebe* is a version for mixed choir of a commission by the Hanover Girls' Choir called *Wenn sich die Welt auflutet*. The Helsinki Chamber Choir performed *Unsere Liebe* in 2010 with Nils Schweckendiek conducting. FG ISMN 9790550110205



KARIN REHNQVIST I varje bit bröd/ The bread in my mouth (2009)

SATB a cappella

Karin Rehnqvist is professor in composition at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm. Here she has written a playful choral movement based on a poem by the famous poet Göran Sonnevi, where the cosmos is seen concentrated in a little piece of bread. Text in Swedish and English. GE 11905

Haya! En sång till dagens glädje/ Haya! Song to the Joy of the Day (2009)

SATB a cappella, Dur: 4'

A powerful piece of music, crackling with energy, for the advanced choir. It is sung in "Hayan", a language that Karin Rehnqvist invented just for this work. The piece also contains a few lines of Indian poetry in English. *Haya!* was written for SATB for the final of the Eric Ericsson Award 2009, and has subsequently been reworked into a version for double choir. GE 11918



SVEN-DAVID SANDSTRÖM Hear the voice of the bard (2009)

mezzo-soprano, male choir and organ, Dur: 10'

Text: William Blake. Movements 1 and 3 have a marked character of growing: from the deep pianissimo of the organ and second bass to the powerful, glaring fortissimo chords. The mezzo part is softer and more melodious and the choral movement, which is dominated by the harmonic development, also has sections that are more rhythmically pregnant. GE 11558



FREDRIK SIXTEN Magnificat (2009)

SATB, brass septet (3 tpt, 3 tbn, 1 tba), organ
Dur: 12'

A work in three movements, in which the first gives an energetic expression for the joy of praising. The second movement begins and ends more softly, but also contains a fugato section. The work concludes with a joyful *Gloria patri*.

GE 11498 score, GE 11499 choral score



AGNETA SKÖLD Veni Sancte Spiritus (2011)

SATB, organ

Agneta Sköld's works are often written for her own choirs in Västerås Cathedral (Central Sweden). In this work for mixed chorus and organ based on the text in the medieval Pentecost hymn, the music proceeds in a classical, strict texture with melodies reminiscent of Gregorian chant. The text is in Latin and Swedish. GE 11972



VELJO TORMIS Nostalgia (Eight Favorite Estonian Songs) (1985)

SATB a cappella

The recently re-issued *Nostalgia*, a set of eight fairly easy and beautiful folk songs with English translations, is just one example of Tormis's thought-provoking, hypnotic choral expression. The songs represent nostalgic childhood memories of the distant and happy times the composer was fortunate to experience.

FG ISMN 9790550110434



CARL UNANDER-SCHARIN Spiritual Exercises – Motet No. 3 (2005)

six-part mixed choir a cappella, Dur: 15'

The work can be performed with three groups placed in different quarters in order to exploit the possibilities of the space. The yearning for the Source of Life expressed in the poem by St. John of the Cross (1542-1591) is formulated musically in a quiet texture that, however, includes several modes of expression: structures with minimalist features are broken off by contrapuntal passages and declamatory sections. The composer states that "the entire piece should be sung meditatively and with feeling". GE 11126