

NORDIC

HIGHLIGHTS

2/2009

NEWSLETTER FROM GEHRMANS MUSIKFÖRLAG & FENNICA GEHRMAN



TOBIAS
BROSTRÖM:
I am all ears



JYRKI LINJAMA
defends the right to be intimate

Two opera commissions for Kortekangas

Olli Kortekangas has been asked to write two operas. One is a chamber opera with a libretto by Michael Baran for the opening of the new Helsinki Music Centre in the 2011/12 season and has been commissioned by the Sibelius Academy and Senate Properties to commemorate the latter's 200th anniversary. Tampere Opera has also invited Kortekangas to compose an opera to be premiered in spring 2018. The events of this opera will take place during the Finnish Civil War of 1918 and the battle of Tampere. The librettist and stage director is Tuomas Parkkinen.

Kalevala commissions on disc

The works commissioned in honour of the 160th anniversary of the Finnish national epic, the Kalevala, are now on sale in a sumptuous, 816-page jubilee edition containing the text of the epic, photos of works of art commissioned for the project, and two CDs on which the Avanti! Chamber Orchestra and the New Helsinki Quartet play music requested from Kimmo Hakola, Olli Kortekangas, Herman Rechberger, Pekka Jalkanen, Einojuhani Rautavaara and others. *Taiteilijoiden Kalevala* (The Artists' Kalevala) was published by the Finnish Literature Society and is the result of a project in which the Kalevala Society invited twenty artists to take part.



New territory for Hakola

An unusual new work called *Kaihda minua* (Shun Me) by Kimmo Hakola was premiered at the Korjaamo cultural centre in Helsinki on 3 April. It is, he says, "a multi-modal work throwing up some surprising reflections of the depths of the subconscious". Scored for a speaker, electric harp, electronics and video and using a text by Hakola himself, it was performed by the Kimmo Hakola Ensemble with actress Minna Haapkylä as the speaker.

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Sound samples and other material are available at www.gehrmans.se/highlights and www.fennicagehrman.fi/highlights

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Harri Wessman at 60

Composer Harri Wessman was 60 on 29 March. He is known particularly for his chamber music and his numerous solo works in widespread use at Finnish music colleges. He has also composed concertos – that for trumpet, for example, was recorded by BIS in 2007 with Ole Edvard Antonsen as the soloist.

Wessman's forthcoming projects include a trio commissioned by Bence Bogányi for oboe, bassoon and piano probably to be premiered in Berlin, and a concerto for guitar and string orchestra to be performed by the St Michel Strings from Mikkeli, Finland and guitarist Kai Nieminen. True to form, Wessman is also working on some music for teaching purposes and he has recently agreed to be composer-in-residence of the Nyköping Music School in Sweden.

Exciting Heiniö premiere

Helsinki audiences will have a rare treat in September: the premiere of Mikko Heiniö's *Kuukonsertto* (Moon Concerto) commissioned by the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra. It is Heiniö's eighth in a series of variations on the piano concerto tradition: in addition to the piano, the fourth has a string orchestra and mixed choir, the sixth a string orchestra and soprano, and the seventh five percussionists.

The nucleus of the Moon Concerto is, as it were, a Lied: a singer and piano. The subtitle "Reflections and variations on themes by John Dowland and Hugo Ingelius" alludes to the world of King Eric XIV of Sweden about which Heiniö is writing an opera for Turku's year as European Capital of Culture in 2011.



Photo: Annu Mikkonen

Rautavaara opera performances

Two operas by Einojuhani Rautavaara are to be staged in Finland this autumn. In September the Finnish National Opera will be putting on six performances of *Aleksis Kivi*, and on 14 & 15 October the Sibelius Academy will be performing his chamber opera *Aurinkon talo* (The House of the Sun) at the Sibelius Hall in Järvenpää.



More books from Rechberger

Composer Herman Rechberger has once again branched out into new territory. His new book *Scales and Modes around the World* presents over 1,000 scales found in different cultures (See: *New publications*). Before writing it, this linguistic genius and multi-instrumentalist had already written *Rhythm in Arabian Music* and *Rhythm in African Music*, both published by Fennica Gehrman.

Spanish residence for Kyllönen

Timo-Juhani Kyllönen has been appointed composer-in-residence of the El Gran Teatro Falla Camerata for a five-year term ending in 2013. In addition to bringing him commissions, the appointment means music by him will be well to the fore at the annual Cadiz Music Festival. This spring audiences there can hear his *Suite for Children's Chorus* and the song cycle *Ciclo de dos Canciones*, and next year his *Missa Festiva* for soloists, mixed choir and orchestra.

Sandström & Rautavaara at choral festivals

Sven-David Sandström is composer-in-residence at the 5th Choral Biennale, Haarlem, Netherlands on 26 June – 4 July. The programme will include two of his motets, as well as the world premiere of *Drei Gedichte von Egon Schiele*, composed for the Netherlands Radio Choir. A second performance will be at the Europa Cantat XVII in Utrecht in July.

Einojuhani Rautavaara's music will also be heard in Haarlem. The Netherlands Radio Choir will perform the Vespers from the *Vigilia* (All-Night Vigil) on 29 June in a concert broadcast live on Dutch classical radio (Radio 4).

Successful spring for Staern

Following **Benjamin Staern's** success with the striking concert overture *Jubilate* in Gothenburg in April, conductor **Stefan Solyom** will perform the work with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in Glasgow in February 2010. Staern also scored success with his other two spring premieres: the guitar piece *Arpalinea* performed by **Johannes Möller** and the *Tranströmer Songs*, a song cycle for alto voice and serenade ensemble premiered by **Carina Vinke** and the New European Ensemble under **Christian Karlsen** in The Hague.

Schnelzer commissions

Albert Schnelzer has just completed his latest two commissions; *String Quartet No. 1 – The Devil in the Belfry* and *String Quartet No. 2*. Both are due to be premiered in August by the Weber Quartet and the Brodsky Quartet, respectively (See: *Premieres*). A second performance of *String Quartet No. 2* will be given by Brodsky at Cadogan Hall in London on 15 October. Schnelzer's next project is on a larger scale, an oboe concerto for **Francois Leleux**, jointly commissioned by the Swedish Chamber Orchestra and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra for the 2010 season.



Gunnar Helgesson and Kjetil Skarby

Gehrmans gets new CEO

Gunnar Helgesson has been appointed the new CEO for Gehrmans Musikförlag. He will take up his duties on 1 July, when **Kjetil Skarby** retires after nearly 40 years at the publishing house. Helgesson was educated at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, with solo voice as his main subject, and has studied for a diploma at the Royal College of Music in London. For the last ten years Helgesson has been active at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, where he has been responsible for the College's extensive concertising activities in Sweden as well as for concert tours abroad. On the side of his position at the College of Music, he has also been active as a singer. Kjetil Skarby will still after 1 July be attached to a lesser extent to the publishing house.

Paulsson plays Eliasson



The world renowned soprano saxophonist **Anders Paulsson** has taken up **Anders Eliasson's** *Concerto for Saxophone and String Orchestra* in his repertoire. After his premiere of the concerto last autumn, Paulsson has taken the work on tour to Turkey, where it was performed by the Akbank Chamber Orchestra under the direction of **Cem Mansur**. In September Paulsson will perform the concerto another 7 times on his tour with the Norrbotten Chamber Orchestra under the baton of **Eva Ollikainen**.

Jennefelt in Berlin

The newly restored Neues Museum in Berlin was inaugurated in March with the ballet production *Dialogue 09* by the cult-declared choreographer **Sacha Waltz**. In her work she had chosen three pieces from **Thomas Jennefelt's** suggestive choral work *Villarosa Sequences*. 70 dancers, musicians and singers explored the still empty halls in the Neues Museum, which had been a ruin since the Second World War.

The German weekly *Die Zeit* called Sasha Waltz's production a "once-in-a-century success." On each of the sold-out evenings, between 18 and 30 March, an audience of more than 1,000 stood in awed silence after the great finale on the central staircase, before it rewarded the dancers and musicians with thunderous applause.



Photo: Bernd Uhlig © Sacha Waltz

PREMIERES

Spring-Summer 2009

PASI LYYTIKÄINEN

Correntino, for bassoon and piano
Olli Virtanen, bassoon, Kirmo Lintinen, piano
19 March, Espoo, Finland

HARRI VUORI

Die Elfenmusik
Helsinki University SO, cond. Mikko Murdvee
21 March, Helsinki, Finland

BENJAMIN STAERN

Jubilate
Gothenburg SO, cond. Stefan Solyom
2 April, Gothenburg, Sweden

KIMMO HAKOLA

Kaihda minua (Shun Me), for speaker, electric harp, electronics and video
Kimmo Hakola Ensemble & Minna Haapkylä, speaker
3 April 2009, Helsinki, Finland

New work for orchestra

Helsinki PO, cond. John Storgårds
26 August, Helsinki Festival, Finland

BENJAMIN STAERN

Tranströmer Songs
New European Ensemble, cond. Christian Karlsen, sol. Carina Vinke, alto
18 April, The Hague, Netherlands

OLLI KORTEKANGAS

Anna niskasi niellä kynteni jälki, for male choir
Polytech Choir, cond. Juha Kuivanen
6 May, Espoo, Finland

Duetto, for viola and cello

Ensemble Aventura
22 May, Mönchengladbach, Germany

De profundis, for mixed choir and tuba

Klemetti Institute Chamber Choir & Petri Keskitalo, tuba, cond. Heikki Liimola
13 June, Orivesi, Finland

TOBIAS BROSTRÖM

Lucernaris
Gävle SO, cond. Robin Ticciati, sol. Håkan Hardenberger, trumpet
8 May, Gävle, Sweden

ANDERS ELIASSON

Quo Vadis
Swedish RSO, Swedish Radio Choir, cond. Johannes Gustavsson, sol. Michael Weinius, tenor
15 May, Stockholm, Sweden

KALEVI AHO

Sinfonia per organo
Jan Lehtola, organ
25 June, Mänttä, Finland

String Quintet

7 July, Dragsfjärd, Finland (Kemionsaari Music Festival)

SVEN-DAVID SANDSTRÖM

Drei Gedichte von Egon Schiele
Netherlands Radio Choir, cond. Celso Antunes
29 June, The Hague, Netherlands

ALBERT SCHNELZER

String Quartet No. 2
Brodsky Quartet
6 August, Nordland Music Festival, Bodø, Norway

String Quartet No. 1 – The Devil in the Belfry

Weber Quartet
16 August, Kalv Festival, Sweden

MIKKO HEINIÖ

Mänkonsert (Moon Concerto), for mezzo-soprano, piano and orchestra
Finnish RSO, sol. Monica Groop, mezzo-soprano, Heini Kärkkäinen, piano
23 September, Helsinki, Finland

DANIEL BÖRTZ

Goya – opera in two acts
Gothenburg Opera
26 September, Gothenburg, Sweden

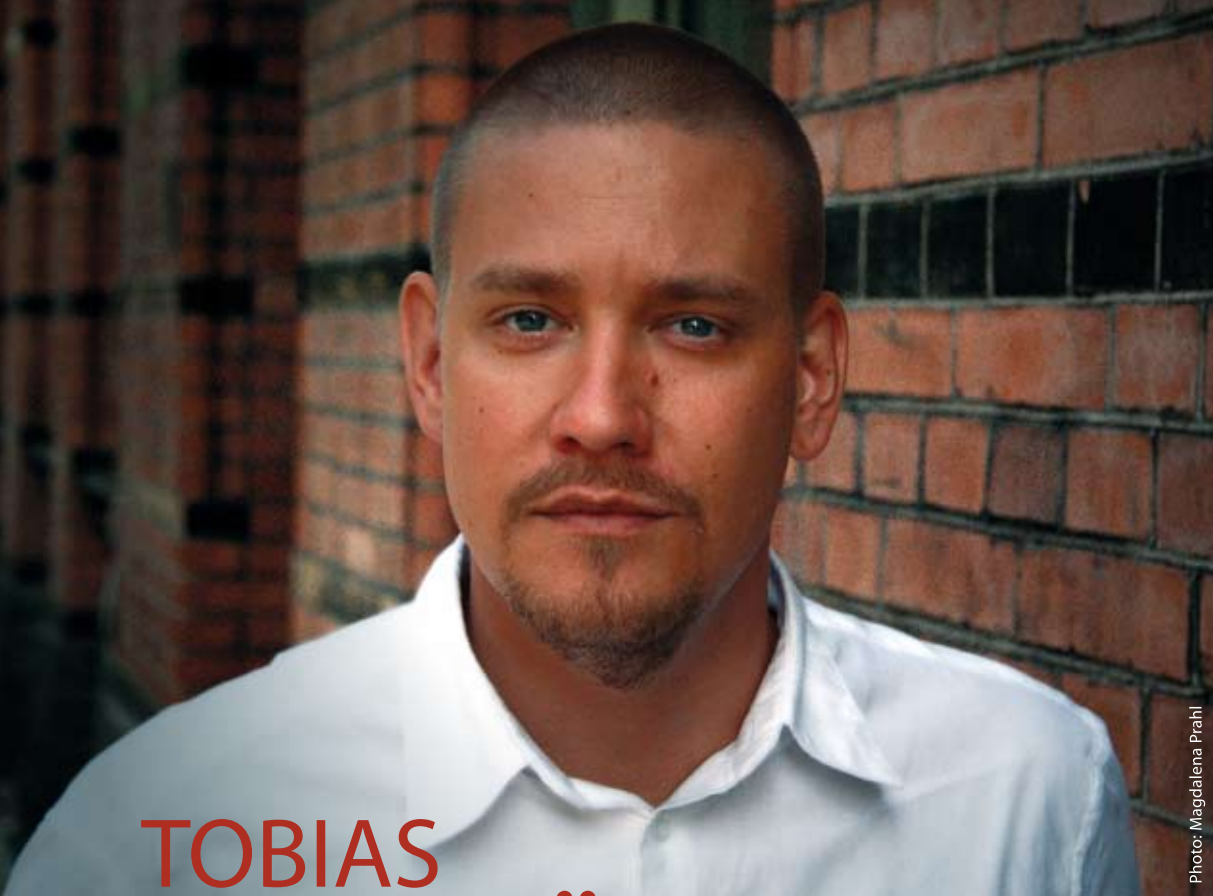



Photo: Magdalena Frahl

TOBIAS BROSTRÖM: *I am all ears*

When I meet **Tobias Broström** in his studio in Malmö he is extracting the instrumental parts to *Lucernaris*, his concerto for trumpet, live electronics and orchestra, a piece which he finished three days earlier and which will be given its premiere performance by **Håkan Hardenberger** and the Gävle Symphony Orchestra under the baton of **Robin Ticciati** on 8 May.

Three years ago Broström finished his composition studies at the Malmö Academy of Music. The period after that has been intensive. His percussion concerto *Arena* was very well received and led to, among other things, a three-year engagement as composer-in-residence at the Gävle Symphony Orchestra. Just lately Broström's *Violin Concerto*  was premiered with **Karen Gomyo** as soloist. "Being composer-in-residence has been of great importance for me. Every year I have received two large commissions and several smaller ones, and since I have a personal relationship to the musicians I have known exactly what the requirements were.


This has given me security in my creative work. All institutions of music ought to have a composer-in-residence so that more composers could get this opportunity."

Broström's studies in Malmö did not just concentrate on composition. Before he started studying under the composers **Rolf Martinsson** and **Luca Francesconi** he took a teacher's degree in percussion. This experience came to

be of considerable importance for him as a composer. If you have yourself played in orchestras and chamber ensembles, you have an understanding of what it is like to learn new music when there is little time for rehearsal, he says. "I have learned that it is vital for the composer to be able to express himself well both in the music itself and in the notation. So I try to convey my musical vision to the musicians in the clearest way possible. If my musical ideas are convincing and the parts well written it is easier to quickly achieve good results when the rehearsal work begins."

The revolt is over

Broström often strives to write idiomatically for the different instruments. That is a significant part of the composer's craftsmanship, he maintains. But it also has to do with how he relates to tradition. "My music gets a kick-off in the tradition. For instance, the Violin Concerto is very classical in its structure. So many good violin concertos have been written by composers who have known exactly how they would squeeze the most out of the instrument; how they would best exploit the special possibilities that the instrument has. I don't want to go against that stream just because some people think that is what modern music should do. Composers in all periods have chosen a certain concept and then been creative within it. We must be able to do this now as well. Modernism revolted against everything that was old and familiar, but now that revolt is over."

In Broström's music there are moments reminiscent of other music, both new and old. But his works are not post modern collages of historical fragments. Instead they are personal and coherent compositions that basically sound modern but, in pursuit of the right expression, also reach out into history. In the orchestral piece *Transit Underground* , for example, one gets an inkling of Stravinsky, the samba, baroque music and romantic string sonorities. In a couple of places it is as if Harry Potter rode past in the harmony. "I am all ears. I listen to a great deal of music and allow myself to be influenced by it. One can no doubt hear a lot of things in my music. As a matter of fact I don't think I have to invent the wheel every time I write a new piece. That would have been stupid!"

"I love Sibelius"

I get an example of how and why similarities to other music appear in Broström's compositions when we speak of warmth, an aspect of his music that he himself thinks is especially important. It seems it is the musical expression

Warmth in music is incredibly important to me, says Tobias Broström who belongs to a new generation of Swedish composers that now make success on the contemporary music scene.

that comes first. The reference to other music you get into the bargain. "Warmth is incredibly important for me. And I feel warmth in my music above all in those places where I, to put it simply, stack triads on top of one another so a kind of modal harmony is created. When, for instance, I build up the harmonies in such a way, it sometimes sounds a little like Sibelius. And that is quite all right by me, because I love Sibelius! It is not because of laziness or fatigue that I continue to use such harmonies, but it is actually because this is what I enjoy. It's that simple."

The consonances in Broström's modal harmony become resting points in music that is for the most part dissonant. This contrasting effect is vital, he points out, because coldness and warmth are the necessary antitheses of each other. Without the one the other also disappears, or at least becomes less interesting. This is also the case with darkness and light, with despair and hope.

Many times we encounter the warmth in Broström's music merely as a breath of air. Often it is a combination of harmony and timbre that causes a liberating – even though quickly passing – feeling to emerge that everything, in the midst of motion, is suddenly in place. But warmth exists also in the large forms. It is there, for example, in the half-hour-long trumpet concerto, whose title *Lucernaris* alludes to a Roman Catholic lamp-lighting ceremony. "The first part of *Lucernaris* is convulsive, dark, heavy and trying. It is not exactly an easy match. The second part shows a way out. The concerto goes from darkness to light, which of course is a metaphor for thousands of things in our lives."

Broström says himself that there is something stereotyped with the opposites darkness and light, coldness and warmth. And these are indeed themes that have been taken up by artists in all periods. In music Beethoven is an obvious example. The conflicts are old, but they are also always of current interest since they seem to be indissoluble components of what it is to be human. As impossible as it seems to find definitive solutions to questions of human warmth and coldness, it is just as important to continue to grapple with them. In Tobias Broström contemporary music has a composer who takes upon himself that task.

Tobias Lund, April 2009

Read more about Broström, watch video clips and listen to sound samples on www.myspace.com/tobiasbrostrom

JYRKI LINJAMA

– a short self-assessment

Jyrki Linjama finds it easy to talk about his studies, posts and music but more difficult to express the personal choices and values guiding his work. He does, however, feel it is important to defend the right to be intimate in an era of growing obscenity. A composer's mission is to be 'difficult'; to swim against the tide.

Linjama started studying composition at the Sibelius Academy in 1979 with **Einojuhani Rautavaara** and **Paavo Heininen**. He also studied abroad: at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, in private lessons in Budapest with **Zsolt Durkó** and on a scholarship at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin, where his teacher was **Witold Szalonek**. In 2003 he obtained an artistic doctorate from the Sibelius Academy. The topic was the interface between concert and sacred music, the chief works being his *Violin Concerto No. 3* and *Vesper*. Apart from composing, Linjama says studying the violin (his main instrument), choral singing and music theory has been particularly important to him.

Jyrki Linjama taught at the Helsinki Conservatory and the Sibelius Academy, and lectured in musicology at the University of Turku 1993–2008. He has also written about music and been active in several organizations (as Chairman of the association for Finnish composers of church music, as a planner of a contemporary church music festival and on the board of the Madetoja Foundation, for example). He has also taught in educational projects, such as workshops in schools.

Mimosa-like quality

Having recently resigned from the University of Turku, Linjama is now a free-

lance composer. His opus list has grown as a result of commissions and consists equally of vocal and instrumental music, sacred and more profane, chamber and orchestral music. So far there has been no music for the stage, but since the beginning of 2009 he has been working on a church opera *Geburt des Täuflers* for the Carinthischer Sommer festival with



Jussi Tapola as dramaturg and librettist. Other major partners have been violinist **Kaija Saarikettu** and the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

One of his jobs at the University was to teach the history of Western classical music. It was, he says, a rewarding task, going systematically through the main concepts that have influenced musical culture. At the same time he constantly reflected on how these views resonate with his own composer identity: "One interesting field is the Baroque: an aristocratic musical culture valuing craftsmanship and consisting of guild-like professional societies – from the days before all the hype and other diverse phenomena of the contemporary 'music industry'. Perhaps my interest has something to do with the general sensitivity of my music, its obvious mimosa-like quality. To me, it's important to defend the right to intimacy, to richness of nuance and protection amid today's ever-growing and increasingly widespread obscenity."

Sensitivity and aggressiveness – can they coexist in church music?

On the other hand, Linjama points out that the core of musical culture is a fruitful tension between counterforces. The relationship between sensitivity and aggressiveness is a force which too easily gets forgotten in speaking of church music – a genre that has gradually become more and more dominant in his work. "Too often only a slightly dragging tempo is considered acceptable in a church service," he says. "But over the long term the Christian liturgy has been a primary breeding ground for Western classical music. In my opinion, the Protestant services could, even today, be more open to professional composers and more interested in their artistic integrity. The financial standing of composers also needs enhancing."

"All in all, the thing I find fascinating about my work is its holistic nature, affording fascinating perspectives on humanity. In general, developments are ruled by a tendency towards control and disintegration. A composer's mission, on the other hand, is to be 'difficult'; to swim against the tide towards comprehensiveness and creativity."

The article is based on texts by Jyrki Linjama

Works by Jyrki Linjama published by Fennica Gehrman

- Pas de deux for orchestra 🎧
- Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 3
- Liturgical Concerto for Organ and Strings
- Partita for guitar and string quartet
- Tango for cello and accordion
- Three Sketches for organ

REVIEWS

Simple beauty and irrepressible subjectivity

The immediacy in addressing the listeners, the simple but never banal lyricism and the folkloric tone of the music are perhaps some of the explanations for the strong impact of the Barefoot Songs... In addition we can enjoy two of Pettersson's concertos for string orchestra...both of them with the irrepressible subjectivity that is Pettersson's trademark.
UNT 5.4. / Ulf Gustavsson

This is absolutely fantastic music.
Allehanda 25.3. / Lars Landström

An exciting experience, due to the synthesis of poetry and music. Their simple beauty can hardly be topped. (Barefoot Songs)

Klassik Heute 18.3. / Rasmus van Rijn

Allan Pettersson: Eight Barefoot Songs 🎧, Concerto Nos. 1 and 2 for Strings

CD: Nordic ChO, cond. Christian Lindberg, sol. Anders Larsson (BIS-CD-1690)

Tormis strikes sparks

Veljo Tormis is mostly familiar as a composer of resourceful vocal music but in his early Overture No. 2, Sibelian Shostakovich à la Tubin, is well worth the occasional outing. It gets a powerful, intense performance here.

Gramophone June 2009 / David Gutman

Veljo Tormis: Overture No. 2 🎧

CD: Cincinnati SO, cond. Paavo Järvi (Telarc CD80702)



Hair-raising work – Broström's best yet?

A complete success with a fantastic wealth of sound, in which the violin part dances friskily, gliding along on ample sonorities. Is this Broström's best yet? I am inclined to think so, as the encounter with Gomyo's fiery temperament suits him perfectly.

Gefle Dagblad 14.2. / Camilla Dal

As usual thrilling and tightly packed harmonies where the violin lay like an ethereal part on top. A fantastic soloist in a fantastic, hair-raising work.

Arbetarbladet 14.2. / Bodil Proos

Tobias Broström: Violin Concerto No. 1

World premiere: Gävle SO, cond. Mats Rondin, sol. Karen Gomyo, 12.2.2009, Gävle, Sweden

Exciting Schnelzer



Photo: Hans Lindén

The music is well structured in rhythm and sound and gives me dramatic tickling sensations. I follow along in the four movements with excitement; the orchestration is refined.

LIRA 9.3. / Stefan Johnsson

Albert Schnelzer:

Azrael Suite

World premiere: Göteborg Wind Orchestra, cond. Alexander Hanson, 6.3.2009, Gothenburg, Sweden

Martinsson + von Otter = success

Anne Sofie von Otter can utilise her entire register from operatic brilliance to a quieter cabaret tone – an exquisite interpretation of an amply varied vocal part that is sensitive to the lyrics... This is new music with a broad contact potential. Martinsson has found a recipe for success.

Sydsvenska Dagbladet 13.3. / Carlhåkan Larsén

As long as von Otter sings Martinsson's song cycle it is a "born classic".

Jyllandsposten 13.3. / Jens Cornelius

Never before have I experienced such a miraculously well-fitting musical costume on a singer's voice... Is it not about time for an opera commission?

Svenska Dagbladet 15.3. / Carl-Gunnar Åhlén

The concert was a triumph... Rolf Martinsson creates sounds that are genuinely beautiful... He takes the task straightforwardly, rarely using full orchestra but with a wealth of delicate, often magical sounds created through selective use of its resources.

The Manchester Evening News 16.3. / Robert Beale

Rolf Martinsson: Orchestral Songs 🎧

World premiere tour: Malmö SO, cond. Vassily Sinaisky, sol. Anne Sofie von Otter, 12–15.3.2009, Copenhagen, Malmö, Manchester



Danish Radio Concert Hall



Photo: Mats Bäcker

Magnificent and turbo-charged Jubilate

A title has surely seldom had such complete coverage in the course of sounding events as this one. Staern included all the prerequisites of the large orchestra in his music... Magnificent sonorities and Staern's glorious, intense emotionalism are certainly contagious regardless with whichever ears one listened.

Göteborgsposten 3.4. / Håkan Dahl

It was turbo-charged music with tremendous power of sound and musical substance.

Nya Lidköpings Tidningar 6.4. / Bo Borg

Benjamin Staern: Jubilate

World premiere: Gothenburg SO, cond. Stefan Solyom, 2.4.2009, Gothenburg, Sweden

Dramatic scena by Staern

One of the finest works here is The Deep Violoncello of the Night, a very fine setting for alto and ensemble of a similarly titled poem by Karin Boye... In this short dramatic scena, the composer successfully and resourcefully draws considerable strength from a small mixed ensemble.

Music-Web International March 2009 / Hubert Culot

Benjamin Staern: The Deep Violoncello of the Night

CD: Sonanza, cond. Jan Risberg, sol. Anna Larsson (PSCD 180)



Photo: Malcolm Crowthers

Sexy sax

Shame on you if you thought the sexy sound of the saxophone does not belong in a symphonic context! The Raschèr Saxophone Quartet held its listeners in a grip of iron from the very first bars and proved precisely the opposite. Aho's music operated deftly between darkly suggestive and dancingly rhythmic. Some echoes of film music also seemed to leap out of the sonorous rhythmic inferno. The soloists' notes, at times shouting, at others whimpering, created a throbbing, oriental bazaar atmosphere...

Hufvudstadsbladet 25.4. / Jan Mikael Vainio

Kalevi Aho: The Bells / Kellot (Concerto for Saxophone Quartet and Orchestra)

World premiere: Helsinki PO, cond. John Storgårds, sol. The Raschèr Quartet, 23.4.2009 Helsinki, Finland



Communicative temperament

The energetic and colorful Accordion Concerto recalls Khachaturian, and acknowledges the solo instrument's Latin American background. ...Lichtenthal opens with a decisive and massive Brahmsian motif which sets the stage for a powerful and impressive orchestral dialogue, intriguingly colored by elements absorbed during the composer's travels in South America... The Concerto grosso is a contemporary take on the Baroque form, with orchestral soloists (including percussion) in lively discourse with the orchestral group, as in the other works here in an appealing tonal idiom strongly reminiscent of Shostakovich.

Records International February 2009

Timo-Juhani Kyllönen: Symphony No. 1, Lichtenthal, Accordion Concerto No. 1, Concerto grosso

CD: St. Petersburg State Academic Capella SO, cond. Alexander Chernushenko, sol. Matti Rantanen, accordion (Alba ABCD 256)

The sheer beauty of the Rautavaara sound

Rautavaara is an expansive composer... The sheer beauty of his sound, of course, explains why these recordings were runaway successes when first released: there is not an ugly bar here.

FMQ 1-09 / Martin Anderson

Einojuhani Rautavaara: The eight symphonies

CD: Leipzig RSO, cond. Max Pommer; Helsinki PO, cond. Leif Segerstam (Ondine ODE 1145-2Q)

Strong Kalevala commissions

Today's composers are genuinely inspired by and have discovered fresh ideas in our epic. The music is tinged with archaism, ritualism, mysticism, shamanism – an ability to relive the world of myth. Kortekangas's Triptych for Seven, being non-vocal, is uninhibited. Pekka Jalkanen's work combines minimalist beauty with impressive, physical drum-and-bass rumbling. Kimmo Hakola's Kal draws the drama surrounding the forging and stealing of the Sampo from an electric harp. A Babel of sound dominates Herman Rechberger's Lumen & Oscura. Salinen's Piano Quintet II and Rautavaara's The Last Runo show that great things can be achieved with traditional ensembles when the vision is strong.

Helsingin Sanomat 27.2. / Veijo Murtomäki

Using the poems assigned to him, Herman Rechberger has composed a striking work full of noise, fury and devastation. To Maestro Einojuhani Rautavaara fell the last runo in the Kalevala, and he used it in a moving, onward-pressing work for string quartet and flute.

Karjalainen 10.4. / Kimmo Nevalainen

Pekka Jalkanen: Taivaallisen härän tappo (Slaying the Heavenly Ox), Herman Rechberger: Lumen & Oscura, Olli Kortekangas: Triptyyksi seitsemälle (Triptych for Seven), Kimmo Hakola: Kal, Einojuhani Rautavaara: The Last Runo

World Premiere: Avant! Chamber Orchestra, New Helsinki Quartet, cond. Jan Söderblom & Kimmo Hakola, 28 February, Helsinki, Finland

Hakola and Kriikku raise temperature in Milan

Any doubts about Hakola's Clarinet Concerto gave way to triumph as Kriikku's blazing, explosive and colourful fireworks and folksy dance-music style made him the audience's darling. The concerto runs through the history of music: Henze, post-impressionism, the rhythms of Musorgsky and Stravinsky and Jewish wedding music...

Corriere della Sera 15.2. / Girardi Enrico

Kimmo Hakola: Clarinet Concerto

Orchestra of La Scala Opera, Milan, cond. Semyon Bychkov, sol. Kari Kriikku, 9.2.2009 Milan, Italy



Photo: Fimic/Saara Vuorjoki

NEW CDs

KALEVI AHO

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Chamber Orchestra of Lapland, cond. John Storgårds, sol. Monica Groop, mezzo-soprano, Anna Kreetta Gribajcevic, viola, Herman Rechberger, darabuka & djembe
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KALEVI AHO

Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra

FREDRIK HÖGBERG

Rocky Island Boat Bay

Norrköping SO, cond. Mats Rondin, sol. Øystein Baadsvik, tuba
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GUNNAR DE FRUMERIE

Circulus Quintus, Dedications

Eva Luthander, piano
Ictus IMP 0806

JOHAN KVANDAL

Piano Concerto, Op. 85

Oslo PO, cond. Ole Kristian Ruud, sol. Håvard Gimse, piano
Simax PSC 1234

LEEVI MADETOJA

Songs (Yrtit tummat, Syksy, Luulit, ma katselin sua, Hyvää yötä, Lintu sininen, Heijaa, heijaa, Ilta etc.)

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KAI NIEMINEN

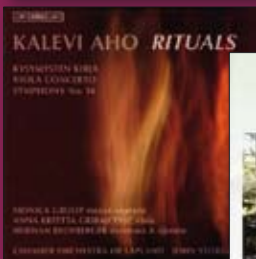
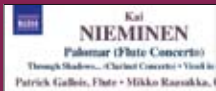
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Sinfonia Finlandia Jyväskylä, cond. & sol. Patrick Gallois, flute, Mikko Raasakka, clarinet
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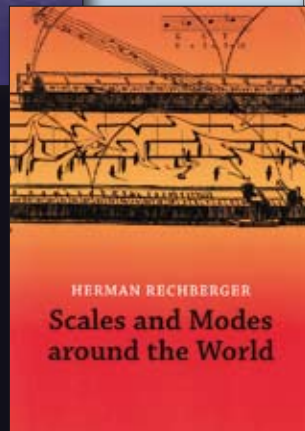
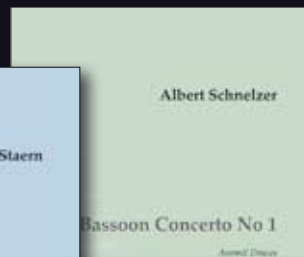
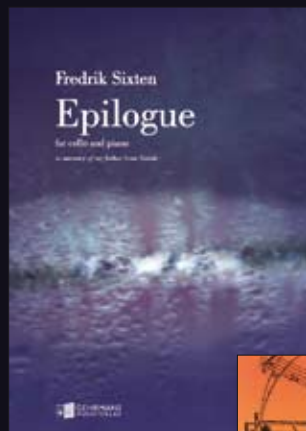
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