

No. 19

# Highlights

SPRING 2006

Newsletter from Gehrman's Musikförlag & Fennica Gehrman



**Svall – a modern Swedish tragedy**  
**Mikko Heiniö and Kimmo Hakola**  
**Martinsson's music in demand**

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Cover: Liine Carlsson and Katarina Giotas  
in Daniel Börtz's opera Svall  
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A new opera by Mikko Heiniö, *The Hour of the Serpent*, is to be premiered this autumn. In composing his music, Heiniö wishes to emulate the way in which Federico Fellini the film director and Antoni Gaudí the architect approached their art. "Their work has tremendous humanity, fantasy, humour and playfulness".

## MIKKO HEINIÖ – The Hour of the Serpent strikes in the autumn

Photo: The Finnish National Opera / Stefan Bremer

After the premiere of the church opera *Riddaren och draken* (The Knight and the Dragon, 2000) in Turku Cathedral, the Finnish National Opera commissioned Mikko Heiniö to compose an opera twice the length. Heiniö reckoned it would take him two years to do, but three years were in fact to pass before *Käärmeen betki* (The Hour of the Serpent) was finished, and he was also working on other assignments as well.

A period as long as this demands a good story if the composer is to enter into the lives of his characters. "The history of opera is full of librettos I couldn't bear to spend three years with. Many of them just stretch out scenes in which nothing really happens." The libretto in Finnish by Juha Siltanen operates at many levels and permits numerous interpretations. "The libretto kept developing throughout the three-year process. We had almost monthly meetings. And in between we communicated mainly by text message."

*The Hour of the Serpent* is set in Helsinki in

1896 and right at the end in Paris. The story focuses on one woman, Alice, and four men. "Though the opera's not called Alice, she's clearly the sun round which the satellites revolve."

In order to defend her honour, Alice holds on to a lie from which she can ultimately be liberated only by leading those around her to their destruction. Each of the four men has a different relationship with the lie. Which of the characters is the seducer, the victim, comic or tragic, and ultimately the Serpent that strikes at the right moment or is reincarnated by shedding its skin depends on the viewer's morals.

The mood is marked by the *fin de siècle* atmosphere and psychoanalysis. "The problem of the main character, Alice, is nevertheless one that faces the modern woman. The erotic-sexual pressure raging within her cannot be held in check within the constraints of the period."

The lie, fib or sham is as topical as ever. Its manifestations fascinated the members of the team working on the project, such as stage di-

rector Erik Söderblom, right from the beginning. The story knits together a variety of genres, such as the picaresque novel, the psychodrama and the thriller.

The Hour of the Serpent is a vast leap from Heiniö's first opera, *The Knight and the Dragon*. It has travelled a long way from the static, fatalistic mystery play performed in an echoing church to the theatre stage and a character drama of unpredictable events and dynamic music. Heiniö, being a marathon runner, knows that an opera is a similar leap into the unknown: neither can be simulated in the lab.

The worlds of the two operas do, however, have a link in the *Sonata da chiesa* or *Four Snake Scenes from the Old Testament* (2005) for brass, celesta and percussion. Some of the material from *The Hour of the Serpent* found its way into this Sonata, but the Sonata music had to allow for the seven-second echo in Turku Cathedral, where it was to be performed. Placed in different parts of the Cathedral, the various instruments exploit this echo effect.

### SINGABILITY, VITALITY AND HYBRIDS

The Second Symphony, *Songs of Night and Love* (1997), has a solo baritone. Heiniö describes it as a programmatic symphony in which the programme is sung. It could in fact be regarded as paving the way for *The Hour of the Serpent*.

As a young man, Heiniö dreamt of a career as a writer and philologist but in the end chose music. In many of his songs and choral works he has subjected the linguistic parameters of his texts to almost systematic treatment. At one extreme are the works whose texts are broken down into their basic phonetic units devoid of any semantic content. Representing the other extreme are

the vocal works in which the meaning is all-important.

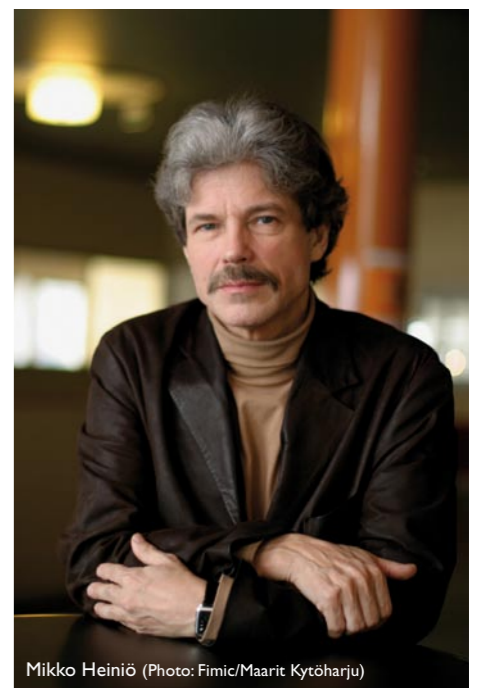
This is the principle behind *The Hour of the Serpent*: apart from a few melismata, the short syllables are kept short and not drawn out into vocalises. "I have respected the relative length and stress of the syllables as far as possible, and it is in fact possible to a considerable degree." Heiniö has admirably solved the problem of singability in modern music. There are no awkward interval jumps. Diatonic cells can be detected, and there are no bulky chromatic blocks in the melodic flow.

Hybrids – unexpected and often crossover formats – are a fundamental feature of Heiniö the composer. The Fourth Piano Concerto, *Genom kvällen* (Through the Evening, 1986), is scored for string orchestra and mixed choir and the sixth, *Hermes* (1994), and seventh, *Khora* (2001), are both dance works. In the sixth the solo piano is offset by a string orchestra and soprano, in the seventh by five percussionists. *Envelope* (2002) for solo trumpet and orchestra was composed round the Haydn Trumpet Concerto, and to be performed without a break between the movements. The Haydn orchestra plays up on the platform, but the other instruments 'envelop' the audience. The soloist moves from place to place.

Nowadays a freelance composer, Mikko Heiniö is also Chairman of the Society of Finnish Composers and Vice-Chairman of Teosto, the Finnish Composers' Copyright Society. He finally relinquished his post of Professor of Musicology at the University of Turku a year ago. He was the author of the volume on contemporary music in the *History of Finnish Music* (in Finnish) that won the nation's most prestigious prize for non-fiction, the Tieto-Finlandia. His work as a musicologist has made him aware of the differ-

ent types of music in the world. Whether he is writing about works of his own or of others, he subjects them to penetrating analysis and where necessary supplements them with graphic tables or diagrams.

His erudition is likewise audible in his music about people and culture. He does not engage in playful irony with stylistic borrowings or dismiss them as 'seen them all'. Instead, he cultivates an exultant but carefully-contrived brand of hybridism, vitality, positive energy and rhythmic drive. "I have a strong liking for characterised rhythm rooted in the spine and the pelvis. Rather than the mathematical abstraction of serial music, I must have a physical sense of rhythm."



Mikko Heiniö (Photo: Fimic/Maarit Kytöharju)

## Editorial

I have, in speaking to composers, often noticed their concern about the future of new music. Though the consumption of music is growing all the time, the space in which our "serious" composers live and breathe and their significance in the field of music have been steadily dwindling over the past few decades. Contemporary music has, they claim, been forced to the margins, where it is kept alive mainly by grants and systems maintained out of public funds. My suggestion that the Internet may soon create more distribution channels and listeners for phenomena on the musical periphery does not seem to elicit a very positive response: music spreads via

the Internet free of charge, and listening to it brings no remuneration for its composers.

Though composers' worry is real, many of the statistics nevertheless provide reason to rejoice: in 2005 there were more listeners at concerts given by members of the Association of Finnish Symphony Orchestras than ever before, and the 30 or so member orchestras gave an astonishing 116 premieres, of which 20 were by non-Finnish composers. The dissemination of music via the Internet has also grown in leaps and bounds in the past couple of years: in 2005 there were more than 300 legal music net stores in the world, some 200 of them operating in

Europe. It is only a matter of time before some of these distribution channels begin to specialise in, say, contemporary music. We publishers must also be prepared to set aside resources for the promotion of new works. The fact that many works considered "difficult" last century have now found an established place in the standard concert repertoire gives us confidence that the publication of contemporary music will, in the long run, be a profitable line of business.

Ari Nieminen

The musicians performing his works are also offered a touch of physical drama, as in the *Piano Quintet* (1993), where they are expected to speak and hum. In *ReLay* (1998) the violinist and cellist get out of each other's way, sometimes literally, and inhabit worlds of their own.

## TENDENCY TOWARDS RHYTHM

Heiniö was using ethnic influences to give his works extra life before there was ever any talk of world music. "I don't know how it originally came about. While I was at school I played rhythm music in a rock band. My teacher during my year in Berlin in 1975 was **Witold Szalonek**, who was interested in ethnic cultures. I chose my records and concerts on two grounds: ethnic and contemporary music."

The orchestral song cycle *Vuelo de alambre* (1983) is based on poems by anonymous Chilean prisoners. Despite their grim background, the texts also express memories and longing. The hidden melodies of the Andies, the marching songs and Latin-American rhythms sometimes find themselves on a collision course, but the emergent eloquence finally radiates sympathy, tenderness and optimism.

"I have a tendency towards rhythms of African origin, even if they have travelled via South America and the Caribbean. But I avoid stuck-on effects, because they lead to postcard folklorism. I examine the deep structures from a European, analytical perspective to see what I can build on them. Pentatonicism, for example, has somehow to be chromatised, and the overall sound ends up as European."

*Vuelo de alambre* uses a 12-note row from which two pentatonic scales gradually become distinguishable as the work proceeds. Expressive chromaticism and folk music overlap, join and part.

Heiniö liberally bends types of music with a strong rhythm to suit his purpose: tango, boogie, rhythm & blues and jazz. The time he spent in Benin in West Africa is reflected in *Khora* for piano and five percussionists.

In composing his music, Heiniö wishes to emulate the way in which **Federico Fellini** the film director and **Antoni Gaudí** the architect approached their art. "Their work has tremendous humanity, fantasy, humour and playfulness. I couldn't work with a frown any more than they could."

Jukka Isopuro

The Hour of the Serpent by Mikko Heiniö is to be premiered at the Finnish National Opera on 15 September 2006.



*Gehrmans Musikförlag has signed an agreement with Rolf Martinsson, who at the age of fifty is busier than ever. There is a great demand for new works by him and his music is performed more than ever before.*

# ROLF MARTINSSON

## – a composer of great appeal

For a long time it was impossible for a composer in Sweden to operate outside Stockholm and "the provinces" were a mere reflection. Not until the last few decades of the twentieth century did this picture begin to change, largely thanks to the advanced composition courses introduced at music academies around Sweden. First in line was the Malmö Academy of Music, and **Rolf Martinsson** belongs to the first generation of composers who were both educated and have continued to work in Malmö.

During his years at the Academy Martinsson studied under **Sven-Eric Johanson**, **Hans Eklund** and **Jan W. Morthenson** and he also came into contact with **Sven-Erik Bäck** and **Brian Ferneyhough**. He thus met and associated with several older generations of Swedish composers, from the so-called "Monday Group" and later, and encountered an expansive international outlook. This gave him a broad stylistic knowledge of and insight into various approaches to music aesthetics.

Martinsson also engaged in intensive studies on his own, the importance of which cannot be overstressed. Delving into classical works on his own by listening to records, attending concerts and studying scores or familiarising himself with modern compositional techniques is very characteristic of him.

## VARIED MUSICAL ROOTS

Martinsson's musical roots lie to a large extent in the music of the early twentieth century. French timbre and impressionistic harmony, above all in the style of Ravel, often had an impact on his early works, such as his first for orchestra, *Impression*. Later the music of the Second Vienna School, and above all the style of **Alban Berg** and the early Schönberg, exerted a considerable influence on him. This gradually led to a more incisive idiom with harsher sonorities and a freer treatment of tonality. Another composer who has influenced his music is **Witold Lutoslawski**

and his new handling of the orchestra and techniques that stratify the harmonies. Martinsson is also a great jazz fan – some of his favourites include **Oscar Peterson**, **Art Tatum** and **Erroll Garner** – and a proficient jazz pianist, but just for his own amusement! Basically he has always been critical in his relation to models and has gone his own way, developing his own style. The result of all this, and something characteristic of him, is the effective combination of a skilfully crafted composition with a strongly personal and tensely expressive idiom in music that has greatly appealed to musicians and audiences alike.

Martinsson's great proficiency has made him very much in demand and respected as a teacher. He has taught composition at the Malmö Academy of Music since the mid-1980s, helping to build up and develop the Academy, not least by creating an active network between the teaching of composition and professional musical life. He has also been asked to hold seminars and masterclasses in Scandinavia and throughout Europe, including the Royal College of Music in London and in spring 2006 the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Vienna.

At an early stage in his career Martinsson already began collaborating with a number of leading Swedish soloists and chamber musicians. During the 1980s and 90s he wrote a great many solo and chamber works for both traditional ensembles such as the string quartet and the wind quintet, but also for unusual instrumental combinations, preferably including voices. He has often given the works poetical and evocative titles such as *Garden of Chimes*, *Dawning Landscapes* and *Luminous Surface*, which help the listener to enter into the music. He is also planning a broad series of piano works inspired by the signs of the zodiac and composed in cooperation with such leading Swedish pianists as **Per Tengstrand**, **Peter Jablonski**, **Hans Pålsson** and **Francisca Skoogh**. Begun in the late 1980s, the series is still in progress and a few signs still remain – so interested pianists should avail themselves of the opportunity to get in line!

## THE ORCHESTRA AS A MEDIUM

In the mid-1990s Martinsson started to get interested in the full orchestra and its expressive potential. The result was *Dreams – Symphonic Scenes* (1995), a key work in his oeuvre. It contains a number of features that would appear again later and be developed in the large-scale solo concertos. Many of the work's building blocks are presented already in the opening section. What the listener later on encounters is music with opulent and complex harmonies that range over the whole tonal palette and move in a spectrum from triads to atonality; and sound worlds that on one hand tower aloft in violent, dissonant culminations and on the other hand flow out into tranquil, lyrical sections. The music clearly creates atmosphere and has a narrative character. Those who associate Martinsson's structural thinking with films, with cuts between musical scenes, are not far off the mark. The work was in fact greatly inspired by **Akira Kurosawa's** film "Dreams", which also lent its name. Martinsson himself says about the background:

"In the early 90s I saw Kurosawa's *Dreams* at a cinema in Malmö. This was a very powerful experience for me. The film has a number of terse, consecutive dream scenes that create imaginative spaces with clear contrasts. A play with images and colour as well as tempo and drama forms a complex whole, full of musical associations. I did not hesitate to use this cinematic experience as an inspirational point of departure for form as well as a dramatic course of events. My ambition was never to write film music, but rather, in my own personal way, to reflect and interpret what I experienced when I saw the film."

Commissioned by the Malmö Symphony Orchestra, *Dreams* was Martinsson's first large-scale orchestral work. Thanks to the positive reception from audiences and orchestra alike, it quickly entered the Orchestra's permanent repertoire. It has been performed a number of times, on tours, etc., and has been recorded on CD. Its artistic success eventually led to Martinsson's attachment to the Orchestra for a number of years as Composer-in-Residence and Artistic Adviser and he is the first composer to occupy this position with the Malmö Symphony Orchestra.

One outcome of this partnership is the large-scale cantata *The Silver Night* for soprano, chorus and orchestra. In several ways this is perhaps one of Martinsson's most deeply personal works. The texts are lyric poems by **Vilhelm Ekelund** (1880–1949), and the emphasis is on the experience of the scenery of southern Sweden. The years spent by the young composer in the north Scanian countryside, with its special scenery between flat land and forest, has no doubt been a

strong source of inspiration. His childhood memories of nature mysticism, woodland glades and meadows are reflected through Ekelund's poetry and acquire musical form in an ecstatic, expressive part for solo soprano, a saturated choral texture and shimmering orchestral sonorities.

Apart from the work for large orchestra, Martinsson has over the past few years preferred to write music for strings. A work originating in his close collaboration with conductor **Neeme Järvi** is *A. S. in Memoriam* for large string orchestra. Järvi immediately took on the work, and has often performed it around the world, and on his tour of Japan with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra. A number of other conductors have also adopted the late-romantic-sounding piece developing in a dynamic arch with long lines. Towards the beginning is a short quotation from **Arnold Schönberg's** (to whom the A. S. refers) *Verklärte Nacht* as a homage to one of the composers who have meant most to Martinsson. The success of this work has also led to two new works commissioned for the same instruments, *String Moments* (2001) and *Kalliope* (2004). *Kalliope* consists of nine short movements that paint a kind of character portrait of the muses of antiquity. It differs from A. S. in Memoriam in that its form is more impulsive and fragmented. Both pieces have been recorded, a composer portrait of Martinsson on Daphne Records (CD 1022), and it is interesting to compare the results produced by Martinsson with the same medium. Also on the CD, which also features the Malmö Symphony Orchestra, is *Dreams*.

## SOLO CONCERTOS

The works that have really put Martinsson on the international musical map in the past few years are his solo concertos. The first to be finished was that for the trumpet, *Bridge* (1998), written for **Håkan Hardenberger**, the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra and Neeme Järvi. Seldom has a new work been so keenly awaited, and seldom has a premiere received such an ovation! The big final build-up, with its violent energy and a solo part reaching higher and higher must be without precedent in Swedish music.

The concerto took shape in very close collaboration between Martinsson and Hardenberger. Martinsson says that Hardenberger's musicality,

his rich palette of timbres and instrumental virtuosity were considerable sources of inspiration when he wrote the solo part.

This close collaboration with the musician for whom the work is written is a method that Martinsson has used in the subsequent concertos as well. In this way the musicians feel that the concertos become their own, unique works, and that they perform something that was created just for them. Hardenberger has now toured the world, playing this concerto to great acclaim. As of spring 2007 the concerto will have been performed over 40 times, by such illustrious ensembles as the Detroit and BBC Symphony Orchestras. In addition, Hardenberger has performed it during an extended tour of Germany with the Helsinki Philharmonic and **Leif Segerstam**. His last stop was the Berlin Philharmonic. *Bridge* is available on the BIS label (CD 1208) with Hardenberger, the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra and Neeme Järvi.

One more concerto for a brass instrument, the trombone, was written in 2004: *Fairlight*; this time for another world-class Swedish musician, **Christian Lindberg**, and the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, who premiered it under **Alan Gilbert**. *Fairlight* received the 2005 prize of the Swedish Society for Music Publish-



Rolf Martinsson (Photo: Anders Åberg)

ers for the most significant serious music work of the year.

2005 was a very productive year for Martinsson; he composed two more solo concertos in addition to a shorter piece for orchestra. The *Cello Concerto No. 1*, written for **Mats Lidström** and premiered in the spring, was commissioned jointly by the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Malmö Symphony Orchestra on the initiative of Lidström and the festival "From-Sweden.com". The first to perform the work was the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the recording made on that occasion was broadcast on BBC3 and thus reached audiences of millions all over the world. The conductor in London was **Mario Venzago** and in Malmö **Christoph König**, two conductors who have often performed Martinsson's music. The concerto brings out the instrument's rich expressive potential, ranging from romantic cantilenas to virtuosic frenzy. For Mats Lidström, Martinsson has also arranged a solo cello work, *Exposé*, from the cadenzas.

September saw the premiere of the Flute Concerto that was given the poetic-sounding name *Shimmering Blue*. Martinsson here uses an exciting new development in instrumental technology created by flutist **Magnus Båge**, which makes it possible to play advanced glissandi. The flute at times thus sounds like a completely new

instrument. *Shimmering Blue* was premiered by Båge, the NorrlandsOpera Symphony Orchestra and conductor **Paul Watkins**. Martinsson has again arranged parts of it as *Vision* for solo flute.

In 2005 Martinsson received a commission from the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra for the Baltic Sea Festival in late summer. The result was *Open Mind*, a concentrated, ten-minute work that is in many ways a summary of where Martinsson stands today. It is an attractive work, rewarding and impressive as an opening item for a concert – in every way a modern concert overture. It was premiered by the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and **Manfred Honeck** on a tour of the Baltic countries, and was also performed at the festival in Stockholm.

## COMPOSER IN DEMAND

Music by Martinsson awaits a number of Swedish and international performances. Three of A. S. in Memoriam are planned for 2007 by Neeme Järvi with his new home orchestra, the New Jersey Symphony. The Trumpet Concerto continues its triumphal march with performances during 2007 in Madrid, with the Spanish Radio Symphony Orchestra/ORTVE, and on a tour of the Balkan countries with the Royal

Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra and conductor Alan Gilbert – in each case with Håkan Hardenberger as the soloist. When Swedish orchestras go on tour abroad, they often choose Martinsson to represent contemporary Swedish music. Another highlight for 2007 will be Christian Lindberg's performance of *Fairlight* at the Musikverein in Vienna together with the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra/ORF under **Bertrand de Billy**.

Several new works are, of course, waiting to be written. Martinsson will end his Composer-in-Residency with the Malmö Symphony Orchestra with two new commissions: a song cycle for **Anne Sofie von Otter** and a big symphonic work. Swedish violinist **Jan Stigmer** awaits a *Violin Concerto*. A concerto for double bass player **Dan Styffe** is being discussed with the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra for the 2009/2010 season, and some other large-scale works are being negotiated.

The demand for new music by Rolf Martinsson seems to be growing steadily, and his diary looks like being full for a long time to come.

*Staffan Storm*

ARI NIEMINEN

# KIMMO HAKOLA

## and his box of magic tricks

*In this interview Kimmo Hakola talks about where he finds his magic tricks, what inspiration means to him and what it is like to have too many attractive options. He also wonders whether contemporary music will have a place in the world of tomorrow and speaks of his most recent works.*



Kimmo Hakola (Fimic/Saara Vuorjoki)

**One of the salient features of your works ever since the early *Capriole* has been a sudden and unexpected shift in the musical landscape. Do you plan the dramaturgy of your works in advance, and can you tell us something about how your compositions come about?**

KH: A work may begin in a number of different ways. Sometimes it may start with a harmonic skeleton, i.e. the construction of a harmonic grammar, sometimes the format alone. To me, the dramaturgy of a composition means form. In speaking of my compositions I prefer to use the term form, because dramaturgy points more to extra-musical effects and things connected more with, say, the theatre or cinema, or that are typical of programme music. So far it's been terribly important to me for the musical idea to have a clear nature and character. The starting point for a piece differs from one work to another. I don't usually like fixing too many parameters in advance, preferring to let the music to follow its own head.

In practice, the work is on my mind throughout the composition process, travelling, sleeping, at meetings, wherever I go. It develops and inhabits a compartment of its own in my brain. I jot down any ideas that occur to me either verbally, or by drawing diagrams, or maybe by playing and storing midi files on my computer. I often have very many such embryo works or brain compartments on the go at the same time. My verbal notes go back as far as the 1980s, and the first sketches for, say, my very wild and complex *A même les échos* for solo violin were in the form of texts. Sometimes these texts also generate genuine literary expression, and my series of

poems *Tuskan saleissa* (In the Halls of Pain), for example, was a therapeutic job before I started on my *Piano Concerto* and served to trigger my creative streak. I later used some of these poems in a composition of the same name.

Once the title, the instruments and so on have fallen into place, the image of the work gradually comes into focus and the music acquires a certain habitus of its own. Everything may, however, change when I shut myself off to compose the work and delve deeper into its world. At some stage I mentally run through the whole work in real time. After this come the most important stages of all: I have to decide whether everything works as planned and in which directions to proceed. My recent administrative jobs have taught me to make decisions. When I was younger, I sometimes got bogged down and depressed for the simple reason that there were too many attractive options. But composing has never been difficult for me because I haven't had enough material or because I couldn't get anything down on paper; on the contrary, there's always been too much material. By the time the Piano Concerto at last took off after a couple of false starts, I had enough material for as many as five piano concertos.

**The Piano Concerto marked a significant stylistic branching-out in your career. Since then, you have been free to do precisely what you want. Despite the abundance of material in a variety of styles, the concerto is nevertheless homogeneous.**

KH: Homogeneous in a work is a kind of system operating at a lower level or beneath the surface on which the structure rests. At thematic

level my compositions make widespread use of the traditional variation of motifs and themes. Another very concrete method for me is to write tonal centres via, say, an organ point or some other texture that is mirrored by the rest of the music. Despite the multiplicity of styles I do not, however, use direct loans; as a rule, I myself write music evoked by some style or image in my mind. Though I claim that there is "Turkish music" in *Anana*, it actually comes from the fairytale Turkey inside my own head. On the other hand I also reflect the listeners' fantasy, and this allows me to open up yet another box of magic tricks when the others have run out. Since this use of stylistic allusions seems to work in repeat performances of a work, I have never regretted it. There is a tremendous lot of fun in the Piano Concerto for the music-lover familiar with keyboard literature: it is in fact a comment on all concerto literature, and the listener will find allusions to Beethoven and Brahms, or say Reger and virtually unknown concertos.

**Is such a traditional word as "inspiration" important to you?**

KH: Yes, it's very important. In my works I apply all my technical know-how, but I'm not the sort of artist who sets out simply to construct music; I need to be in an enthusiastic mood where my imagination runs free – what you might call inspiration. My attitude in life has been to be inventive, and I'm also very curious about the potential afforded by computers. Since *Sacrifice* I've been actively corresponding with IRCAM and I've been kept well informed about what is happening in the music software sector. Apart from music I'm also interested in visual software

## Works published by Gehrman's Musikförlag

### Concertos:

**Bridge** – Trumpet Concerto No. 1 (1998)  
**Fairlight** – Trombone Concerto No. 1 (2004)  
**Shimmering Blue** – Flute Concerto No. 1 (2005)  
**Cello Concerto No. 1** (2005)

### Orchestra:

**Dreams** (1995)  
**Open Mind** (2005)

### String orchestra:

**A. S. in Memoriam**/small str.orch. (1999)  
**A. S. in Memoriam**/large str.orch. (1999/2001)  
**String Moments** (2001)  
**Kalliope** (2004)

### Chamber music:

**Scorpius** (1987)/piano  
**Triptyk** (1987)/bass clarinet, piano/distr. by Gehrman  
**Oboe Quartet** (1988)/distr. by Gehrman  
**Carillon** (2006)/brass ensemble

### Choir (a cappella):

**Vattennätter** (1987)/mixed choir  
**Månsånger** (1993)/male choir  
**Mouthpiece** (2006)/male choir

## Commissions

**Violin Concerto No. 1** (2006)  
 Jan Stigmer, Swedish Ch. Orch.

**Orchestral Songs** (2007)  
 AnnSofie von Otter, Malmö SO

**Symphony No. 1** (2008)  
 Malmö SO

**Double Bass Concerto** (2009)  
 Dan Styffe, Oslo PO (under discussion)

## Selected recordings

**Bridge**  
 Håkan Hardenberger, trumpet/  
 Gothenburg SO/Neeme Järvi  
 BIS-CD-1208 (TRUMPET CONCERTOS)

**Kalliope, Vid tidens slut, A. S. in Memoriam, Dreams**  
 Jacques Vverup, recit./Malmö SO/  
 Christoph König/Markus Lehtinen  
 DAPHNE 1022 (DREAMS)

**Libra, Leo, Gemini**  
 Anders Kilström, piano  
 DAPHNE 1018 (SOLO)

**Coloured Flames**  
 The Amadé Quintet  
 DAPHNE 1019 (FLAMES)

**Tics**  
 HOT3  
 PSCD 148 (TRIO CON FORZA)

**Libra**  
 Hans Pålsson, piano  
 CSCD 00032 (Dedicated to Hans Pålsson)

## Selected performances 2006–07

**16/2/2006**  
**Fairlight**  
 Christian Lindberg, trombone/Malmö SO/  
 Mario Venzago  
 Concert Hall, Malmö, Sweden

**6/4/2006**  
**A. S. in Memoriam**  
 Kristiansand Ch. Orch./Ulf Wallin  
 Adger Theatre, Kristiansand, Norway

**18–21/4/2006**  
**Luminous Surface** (New York City premiere)  
 The Rutgers Perc. Ensemble/She-e Wu  
 New York City, New Brunswick, USA

**28/4/2006**  
**Kalliope**  
 Tromsø Ch. Orch./Jan Stigmer  
 Sparebankens Festsal, Tromsø, Norway

**6/5/2006**  
**Mouthpiece** (World premiere)  
 Lund University Male Voice Choir/  
 Mats Paulson  
 Universitetsaulan, Lund, Sweden

**12/5/2006**  
**Aquarius** (World premiere)  
 Ha-Young Sul, piano  
 Dunkers Kulturhus, Helsingborg, Sweden

**15/5/2006**  
**Symbiosis** (Austrian premiere)  
 Duo Gelland, violins  
 Alte Schmiede, Kunstverein, Vienna, Austria

**21/5 – 26/8/2006**  
**Chords and Bells** (World premiere)  
 Hans Fagius, organ  
 Copenhagen, Tokyo, London, Haag

**12/11/2006**  
**A. S. in Memoriam + Open Mind**  
 Helsingborg SO/Otto Tausk  
 Concert Hall, Helsingborg, Sweden

**7/12/2006**  
**Cello Concerto No. 1**  
 Mats Lidström, cello/Norrköping SO/  
 Michail Jurovski  
 De Geer Hall, Norrköping, Sweden

and 3D modelling, and I hope at some stage to be able to construct works combining music by me with a visual environment. The most perfect of all would be a DVD opera using 3D technology in which I could do everything myself, stage designs and all. In other words a work that was one hundred per cent digital and that was never intended to be performed or played except from a DVD.

**Your oratorio *Le Sacrifice* is possibly your most important work to date. The orchestral version was premiered at the 2005 Helsinki Festival together with the Tarkovsky film of the same name. How does the music stand in relation to this film?**

KH: The whole oratorio was in a way a tribute to the life's work of **Andrei Tarkovsky**, his ideas and the films directed by him. The place where the works meet is the landscape in the film, but as the work proceeds, I disassociate myself from the world of the film and use it to build a drama of my own, using my own texts but still in the spirit of Tarkovsky. The point where our paths meet and part is really like a line drawn on water.

**As Artistic Director of *Musica nova Helsinki* you have had an excellent vantage point over the contemporary music field. Is pluralism the ongoing trend in contemporary music, and how do you see the future of new music?**

KH: The situation with regard to contemporary music is very vague at the moment. I can detect different national ways of approaching composition: we have Italian modernism, composers



writing in the French style, and Germany is a world all of its own. Typical of America are the university composers making a career for themselves on their own campus but quite unknown elsewhere. All in all the cards seem to be well and truly shuffled. The composers who have managed to find themselves a publisher do indeed stand out in the crowd and it's greatly thanks to the music business that contemporary music has managed to get its foot in the concert hall doors. On the other hand, the situation is confused by the fact that we don't know where the world is going as regards music publishing and, say, the recording industry, or what sorts of resources the music business will be prepared to invest in promotion and in singling out new composers.

Pluralism really is a dominant feature of music, but the ghost of strict post-serial Darmstadt is still hovering in the background, though this again is gradually seeking new outlets. Right now, academic composing has least contact with real people. We should ask ourselves who we are composing for: are we writing for ourselves, for our friends, or the public at large? I'm very sceptical about new music because the question is to a great extent: will there be room for it in the world of tomorrow, and will there be a demand for a marginal phenomenon such as this? The marginal may, in the future, survive only so long as it receives public funding.

**At the recent Tampere Biennale you had an organ work called *Altar* lasting an hour and performed by you yourself.**

KH: The organ is an enormously educational instrument, because it has all the orchestral registers. Through the organ you learn that only certain harmonies or combinations, interval inversions and positions work on certain instruments and in particular registers. If I were teaching composition now, I would have all my students playing the organ. The organ interprets nothing of its own accord: it just produces the sounds, and you have to learn via the phrasing and texture to achieve things that come automatically on the piano, for example, by using the pedals and changing the dynamics.

**You are at present working on a major opus for choir and orchestra. Can you envisage the format and duration already?**

KH: The oratorio *Song of Songs* is for baritone, large choir and orchestra to a text from the Bible. The biblical Song of Songs – the Song of Solomon – is some of the most beautiful love poetry ever written. The oratorio will probably run to about 40 minutes and its premiere is scheduled for autumn 2006 in Espoo. The male part will be sung by our most beautiful baritone voice, **Jorma Hynninen**, and the female part by a group of seven women singing in unison or in parallel material. The work looks like being very lyrical and bright, even impressionistic. ■

## NEWS & EVENTS

### ELIASSON IN HELSINKI AND MUNICH

Concertos for violin, piano and orchestra are rare in the history of music, but 19 April saw the world premiere of a new one by **Anders Eliasson**. The idea came from pianist **Roland Pöntinen** and violinist **Ulf Wallin**, to whom the concerto is dedicated. Eliasson had earlier thought of writing a piano concerto but instead it became a *Concerto for Violin, Piano and Orchestra*, "something completely different and extremely difficult to compose", he says. The concerto was commissioned by Concerts Sweden and the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, who premiered it with Pöntinen, Wallin and conductor **Pietari Inkinen** at Finlandia Hall in Helsinki.

The world premiere of Eliasson's *Symphony No. 4* will take place in Munich on 1 December. **Arturo Tamayo** will conduct the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra in this joint commission by the Bavarian Radio/Musica Viva and the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra. The Swedish premiere will be in 2007.



Pöntinen, Wallin and Eliasson in Helsinki (Photo: Roland Horovitz)

### TUBIN'S COMPLETE WORKS AVAILABLE SOON

The first volumes of **Eduard Tubin's** "Complete Works" will be published at the end of this year with texts both in Estonian and English. They will contain scores of the 9th and 10th symphonies and his piano works. The edition is meant for libraries, higher educational institutions, orchestras and concert associations, but also musicians and all other interested parties. The Eduard Tubin International Society and Gehrman began preparing for this project back in 1997 already. The massive edition is based on genres, constituting seven series in all with 34 volumes.

Gehrman will start offering subscriptions this autumn. A subscription folder will be enclosed with the next issue of Highlights.

### HÖGBERG COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE

**Fredrik Högberg** has been appointed Composer-in-Residence of the Stockholm Wind Symphony Orchestra for the 2006/07 season. His commission includes *The Tuba Concerto Troll Tuba* written for the Norwegian virtuoso **Øystein Baadsvik**. Based on the famous fairytale about the "Three Billy Goats Gruff", it was premiered on 19 January. It was also recorded on CD by BIS. The next work will be a *Double Concerto* for trombonists **Christian Lindberg** and **Nils Landgren**.

### DANIEL BÖRTZ PERFORMANCES

It is almost 15 years since **Daniel Börtz** composed his *Tenth Sinfonia*. This autumn will see the premiere of his *Sinfonia 11*, which is a joint commission from the Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Västerås Sinfonietta and Nordic Chamber Orchestra. The Swedish Chamber Orchestra will give the premiere under **Ingar Bergby** in Örebro, Sweden on 23 November. During spring 2007 the other two orchestras will perform the work in Västerås and Sundsvall.

The concert overture *Parodos* is one of Börtz's most frequently performed works. It has been played several times throughout Europe and in 2007 will be heading for New York. The New York Philharmonic and **Alan Gilbert** will give it its American premiere in February.

### DAFGÅRD'S SINFONIA NO. 1

Gehrman has signed an agreement for yet another orchestral work by **Jörgen Därfgård**, *Sinfonia No. 1* from 2004. Därfgård says: "When writing this work, I wanted to leave room for a broad range of characters while keeping an underlying sense of unity. I started with a tone-material in which I seemed to hear a great deal of interesting expressive possibilities. By introducing a number of limitations and applying different compositional techniques I worked out a range of characters with such scope that it could supply the materials for several more or less independent sections. At the same time I planned the work as a single continuous movement. The final result came to be a synthesis of a work in many movements and a one-movement work, with a parallel in **Arnold Schönberg's** *First Chamber Symphony* (1906)."

*Sinfonia No. 1* was first performed in October 2004 by the Nordic Chamber Orchestra under **Christian Lindberg** and was enthusiastically received by the audience.



The Poznan Ballet (Photo: NorrlandsOperan/Johan Günséus)

### LIDHOLM'S RITES IN NEW CHOREOGRAPHY

The world premiere of *En Face*, a new ballet by choreographer **Susanne Jaresand** with music to **Ingvar Lidholm's** *Rites* (from 1959), was given at the NorrlandsOpera in December 2005 by the foremost dance ensemble of Poland, the Poznan Ballet together with the Norrlands-Opera Symphony Orchestra and conductor **Andrea Quinn**.

*Rites* was already choreographed in 1960 by **Birgit Åkesson** in a ballet performance at the Royal Opera in Stockholm. Lidholm's music is associated thematically and musically with Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, and ritual also features in Jaresand's choreography. Ingvar Lidholm's *Rites* was a new acquaintance for Andrea Quinn – and a pleasant one, she says, with its mixture of the explosive and the chamber-musical, the grandiose and the intimate, the rhythmically fixed and the freely improvised.

### GRAMMY AWARD FOR KHOROS CD

**Ingvar Lidholm**, the Eric Ericson Chamber Choir and BIS were awarded the Swedish Grammy in the "Classical Ensemble of the Year 2005" category for the double CD *Khoros* (BIS 1549/50). The explanatory statement says: "The powerful CD can be seen as the culmination of nearly 60 years of cooperation between the two giants Ingvar Lidholm and **Eric Ericson**. This includes most of Ingvar Lidholm's compositions for a cappella choir."

### SANDSTRÖM PREMIERES

*Mass 2006*, a large-scale work for choir and Orchestra by **Sven-David Sandström** was premiered in Stockholm Cathedral by the Gustaf Sjökvist Chamber Choir, the string orchestra

*Musica Vitae* and violinist **Dorota Siuda**, under conductor **Gustaf Sjökvist** on 19 March. *Mass 2006* consists of choral and orchestral items from the 1980s to the present day, and begins with a *Prelude*, the last movement from Sandström's third string quartet, here in an arrangement for string orchestra. Then follow several Mass movements: *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Laudamus* and *Credo*, some in their original settings for mixed chorus, but the *Gloria* in a new arrangement for string orchestra. Between the movements Sandström has inserted an *Interlude* for solo violin and strings from his double concerto *Thoughts and Memories* for violin, cello and strings, *Psalm 139* in a new version for strings, and a new setting for choir and string orchestra, *Nakna, kalla* (Naked, Cold) of a text by **Katarina Frostenson**. This was first intended to be part of Sandström's large-scale passion *The Word*. The Mass ends with Sandström's beautiful *Agnus Dei* of 1981.

On 20 June **Håkan Hagegård** and the Vocal-Essence Ensemble Singers will premiere another choral work by Sandström (*Five Pictures from the Bible*), scored for baritone solo and six part mixed choir. The performance will take place at the Benson Great Hall in St. Paul, Minnesota, USA under the direction of **Philip Brunelle**.

### NILS LINDBERG AT THE AALBORG OPERA FESTIVAL

*Elf-shot*, a new suite by **Nils Lindberg**, was premiered in the packed Nörre Utrup Church on 19 March at the Aalborg Opera Festival in Denmark. Approx. 50 minutes long, it was, like his earlier *Requiem* and *A Christmas Cantata*, scored for reinforced big band, mixed choir and three vocal soloists. The libretto is based on the old Danish folk song *Elverskud*, in an English translation. *Elf-shot* was written for Aalborg University, which contributed its big band and chamber choir conducted by **Mogens Dahl** with Lindberg himself as the pianist.

## NEW HEININEN PIANO CONCERTO

Juhani Lagerspetz premiered Paavo Heinen's new *Piano Concerto No. 4* with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra on 5 April. The conductor was **Dmitri Slobodeniouk**. The concerto is 55 minutes long, played without a break, and in six movements linked by orchestral interludes. Heinen has himself been the soloist in his three previous concertos, but according to him, breaking the habit gave him a different perspective, and the piano became almost a new instrument for him.

## BIOGRAPHY OF PAAVO HEININEN

A biography of Paavo Heinen by Jan Blom-Astedt is just off the press. It traces his life from childhood in Järvenpää to his departure out into the world to study composition and his return to find Finnish music in a state of flux. Heinen has equipped each chapter with comments of his own and describes how his works came to be written. The book (in Finnish) illustrated with photographs of Heinen at different stages in his life is published by WSOY.



Veli-Matti Puumala  
(Photo: Fimic/Saara Vuorjoki)

## TEOSTO PRIZE FOR PUUMALA

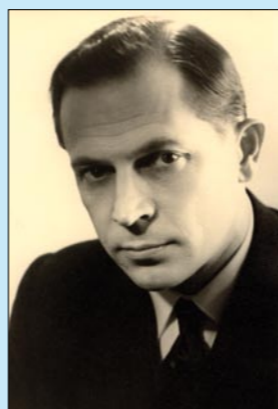
The Piano Concerto *Seeds of Time* by Veli-Matti Puumala was awarded the Teosto Prize of 2005. The Jury described the concerto as being a broad, powerful work consisting of striking contrasts: the hectic mood of the opening movement gives way to a peaceful second movement of magic beauty reflecting the gentle night and the wondrous tranquillity of sleep.

Veli-Matti Puumala has been Professor of composition at the Sibelius Academy since August 2005.

## Erik Bergman in memoriam

Erik Bergman died on 24 April at the age of 94. He was a character beyond compare, and the colour he brought to Finland's musical life will be sorely missed. Known as the Grand Old Man of modernism, he was a composer constantly on the move with a deep interest in remote cultures and an untiring search for the new.

The last work on the opus list of this exceptionally prolific composer was the *Fantasia per tromba e orchestra* of 2003. Bergman was always fascinated by the human voice, and choral works constitute the bulk of his oeuvre. He also composed a number of works for orchestra, and from the 1970s onwards broadened his range to concertos and chamber music.



Erik Bergman in his youth

## ERI AND AHO

One of the items on the spring programme for the ERI Dance Theatre was a choreographed version of the thrilling *11th Symphony* by Kalevi Aho. The performance took up the whole theatre and entered into the music with tremendous force. According to the Turun Sanomat newspaper "the fine music of Kalevi Aho engulfs the viewer-listeners, sucking them into the music and its enactment on the stage. The effect is terrific". The performance begins with sections from *Solo III* for flute, and taking the leading role is the Symphony No. 11 (BIS CD 1336). The production was directed by Tiina Lindfors. The last performances were on May 5, 6 and 7, in Turku, Finland.

## MIDEM AWARD FOR AHO FLUTE CONCERTO CD

The BIS CD 'Nordic Spell' which includes the *Flute Concerto* by Kalevi Aho received the 2006 MIDEM Classical Award for the best contemporary music recording. On the CD Sharon Bezaly performs with the Lahti Symphony Orchestra conducted by Osmo Vänskä. There are also two other Nordic concertos on the same disc which has received a number of distinctions since its release in May 2005.

## AHO PREMIERE BY BBC AND FRÖST

The Swedish clarinetist Martin Fröst premiered Kalevi Aho's new *Clarinet Concerto* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Osmo Vänskä on 22 April. Fröst commissioned the piece with the funds of the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award he received in 2003. After the London premiere the concerto will be recorded for BIS and released next year. The Clarinet Concerto is a virtuosic 30-minute work and the most recent in a long chain of concertos by Aho.

## DIVERSE CONCERTS AT THE TAMPERE BIENNALE

Grouped round the theme – percussion music – of this year's Tampere Biennale in April was a wide variety of concerts in different styles. Among the items on the programme were Herman Rechberger's *Tobá Hanyé* for orchestra and a guitar recital by Kai Nieminen incorporating elements from his new DVD. The Avanti! Chamber Orchestra performed Kimmo Hakola's *Chamber Concerto* at the opening concert of the Tampere Biennale on 5 April, and Hakola was himself the soloist in the premiere of his monumental 70-minute organ work *Altar* on the last day of the festival.

## NORDGREN NEWS

Fennica Gehrman has signed a publishing agreement with Pehr Henrik Nordgren for his recent *Cello Concerto No. 5* and the *Accordion Concerto*. The Tapiola Sinfonietta premiered the Cello Concerto in November 2005, and the Accordion Concerto was heard at the Focus Nordgren concert at the Musica nova Helsinki festival in on 8 March 2006 together with the powerful *3rd Symphony* and the orchestral *Turning Point*.



Music by Nordgren has recently been recorded on two labels. BIS Records released a CD of selected string orchestra works and concertos (CD 1356), and his popular *Portraits of Country Fiddlers* is available on a new disc by Alba Records

(CD 205). Both are by the Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra conducted by Juha Kangas. See the Fennica Gehrman website for more information about Nordgren and some sound samples ([www.fennicagehrman.fi/comp\\_nordgren.htm](http://www.fennicagehrman.fi/comp_nordgren.htm)).

## SOUND SAMPLES AT WWW.FENNICAGEHRMAN.FI

There are now 25 sound samples coupled with biographical information about composers on the Fennica Gehrman website ([www.fennicagehrman.fi](http://www.fennicagehrman.fi)). The first samples are by the following Finnish and Estonian composers: Kalevi Aho, Kimmo Hakola, Mikko Heiniö, Olli Kortekangas, Veli-Matti Puumala, Pehr Henrik Nordgren, Einojuhani Rautavaara, Veljo Tormis and Erkki-Sven Tüür.

## COLOURSTRINGS IN FRANKFURT

The Colourstrings method for teaching stringed instruments was featured at the Frankfurt Music Fair in March 2006, when Géza Szilvay, the father of the method, demonstrated it with German pedagogue Yvonne Frye. The method has been in use since the early 1970s, and the Helsinki Junior Strings, an orchestra of players trained according to it, has been winning great acclaim for its concert tours, discs and TV appearances for three decades already. Fennica Gehrman has published a revised edition of its four-volume Colourstrings Violin ABC supplemented by three books of violin duos. A handbook for teachers will soon be available in English, German, Hungarian, Finnish and French.



Géza Szilvay and Yvonne Frye

## SENSUAL TIMBRES AND SWING!

Mikko Heiniö's *Sonata da chiesa* or Church Sonata is a most successful work. ... Its subject matter and instrumental line-up – the brass section of a symphony orchestra spiced with a wide variety of percussion instruments – has yielded delicate, elegant Oriental allusions, especially in the opening movement. Heiniö has an ear for sensual timbres, but equally marked in this new work is his liking for rhythmic romping. For the second movement of the Church Sonata is a real boogie with a swing that sets one wondering what sort of music Heiniö would write for big band.

Turun Sanomat 11 February 2006 /  
Matti Lehtonen

Premiere: Turku PO, cond. Markus Lehtinen,  
9 February (Katedraali soi! Church Music Week)



Paul Ketelsen and Vincent Le Texier  
(Photo: Thomas M. Jauk/Stage Picture)

## RASPUTIN IN LÜBECK

Splendid premiere to a full house

This work sums up Rautavaara's entire output. The compelling stream of music and the original but Sibelius-inspired impressionism illustrate the northern feel for life – and trust in melody ... and also captivates an audience with a sceptical attitude to "modern music".

Kieler Nachrichten 13 February 2006 /  
Günter Zschacke

This is great opera

A brilliant premiere of an opera staged by the Lübeck Theatre better than many others could have done. The visualisations by stage director Marc Adam have evocative force... This is great opera. ... The chorus's singing and performance were excellent and provided some of the opera's most memorable moments. ... The Frenchman [Vincent Le Texier] gave a brilliant performance and handled the murderous leading role with bravura.

Lübecker Nachrichten 14 February 2006 /  
Jürgen Feldhoff

The Lübeck Theatre gave seven performances of Einojuhani Rautavaara's opera *Rasputin* during the spring 2006 season. Taking the lead was Vincent Le Texier, while Veronika Waldner and Gerard Quinn were cast as the Imperial couple. The orchestra was conducted by Roman Brogli-Sacher.

## ENORMOUSLY ANIMATED PERFORMANCE

Kimmo Hakola unquestionably belongs to the contemporary composer elite. His music is snappily colourful and also has room for humour. In his *Chamber Concerto* he again handles the orchestra with skill and certainly no lack of invention. The work radiates both catchy rhythms and beautiful melodies, and its spirit was compellingly conveyed in the unsparing and enormously animated performance by Jan Söderblom and Avanti!.

Aamulehti 7 April 2006 / Kirsti Vanninen

Avanti!, cond. Jan Söderblom, Tampere 5 April 2006  
(Tampere Biennale)

## REAL SIT-UP-AND-TAKE-NOTICE PIECE

The *Clarinet Concerto* [by Kimmo Hakola] is a real sit-up-and-take-notice piece, built on a very large scale – more than 38 minutes in this riveting account played with scintillating virtuosity by its dedicatee, Kari Kriikku – with four movements and an enormous expressive range. ... It is a tribute to his compositional skill and the force of his creative personality that he is able to hold such a bewildering array together. ... With demonstration-quality sound, this is all great fun.

Gramophone May 2006 / Guy Rickards

CD: Clarinet Concerto, Verdoyances crepuscules,  
Diamond Street; Finnish Radio SO, cond. Sakari Oramo, sol. Kari Kriikku (Ondine ODE 1063-2)



Katarina Giotas as Fadela  
(Photo: Kungliga Operan/  
Alexander Kenney)

## SVALL — a modern Swedish tragedy

March 2 saw the premiere of the opera *Svall (Surge)* by **Daniel Börtz and Claes Fellbom** at the Culture House in Stockholm. It aroused a great deal of attention, not least on account of its subject, honour killings.

*Svall* is **Daniel Börtz's** third opera. Following the success of *The Bacchae*, directed by **Ingmar Bergman** and based on the tragedy by Euripides, and *Marie Antoinette*, to **Claes Fellbom's** libretto about the French queen and the Swedish diplomat Axel von Fersen, Börtz has now decided upon a drama set in the present day.

The tragic honour killings in Sweden that made the headlines a few years ago form the background to this opera about the young Aida, protected by a false identity and a security guard after reporting her father for killing her sister on account of the family's honour. *Svall* is structured like a dream play. The story is told through Aida's flashbacks to life with her sister, Fadela. In hallucinations she recalls memories of Fadela, who fell in love with a Swede, and the conflict that thus arose in the family and eventually led to her murder. The course of events alternates between the present and the past, and between different places. The title *Svall (Surge)* stands for a gush of emotion – love, hate, shame and honour.

*Svall* is based on true contemporary events, but the ancient Greek drama is not

far away. It addresses eternal questions. Börtz has earlier taken an interest in classical drama in, for example, the opera *The Bacchae*, and in his large-scale oratorio *His Name Was Orestes*. They deal with murder, revenge and reconciliation. The classical dramas often also incorporate the theme of reconciliation so important in *Svall*. Fadela tries to seek reconciliation in order to escape the shame and the revenge, but it is not accepted and she has to pay with her life. As Daniel Börtz says in an interview with **Göran Bergendal** in the programme for the opera:

"*Svall* is a way for me and librettist Claes Fellbom to react to the implacable hate. We have no solution. Just that one must always seek reconciliation. The last words in the opera are that love is the only thing that can redeem man; if you don't follow that commandment you will kill God. The only thing that God stands for when it comes to the human being – as I understand it – is love." An opera in two acts, *Svall* is approximately two hours long. It was conceived as a touring opera and thus requires relatively small resources: 8 singing roles, a chorus of 8 that, as in the classical drama, comments on the

course of events, and a small orchestra consisting of 8 wind and 5 brass players, two percussionists, a piano and a small string ensemble.

After the world premiere in Stockholm the opera went on tour to the NorrlandsOpera in Umeå and later back to Stockholm and the Folk Opera. Here are some comments from the Swedish press:

Börtz's score surges with gushes of emotion, an image of a feeling that is aroused and extinguished... With the sensitivity of a theatre musician, Börtz shapes the chamber orchestra into an instrument for the lonely journey of the characters in the cast.

*Svenska Dagbladet* 3 March 2006 / *Sofia Nyblom*

Börtz's music, full of nuances and composed for an ensemble that is manageable and orchestrated in an original way, emphasises, deepens and concentrates in sudden changes, moods and feelings in a way that could never happen in a spoken drama... The experience is powerful and it is hard to defend oneself against it.

*Uppsala Nya Tidning* 5 March 2006 / *Jan Kask*

His flair for writing music that is so congenial to the singers is impressive.

*Norra Västerbotten* 10 March 2006

Daniel Börtz has proficiently dressed the words in an elegant, sublime, subtly sonorous, transparent, voice-sensitive, pungent chamber music texture. Every single word can be heard.

*Expressen* 3 March 2006 / *Gunilla Brodrej*

Cast: Liine Carlsson, Katarina Giotas, Ingela Berglund, John Sax, Jon Nilsson, Per-Arne Wahlgren, Karl Rombo and John-Erik Eleby  
Director: Elisabeth Ljungar  
Orchestra: NorrlandOpera Symphony Orchestra  
Conductor: Jan Söderblom



Kalevi Aho (Photo: Ghadi Boustani)

### ONE OF FINLAND'S BEST-KEPT MUSICAL SECRETS

It's a mark of Fröst's imagination and genius that he chose the Finnish composer **Kalevi Aho** to write him a clarinet concerto. Aho is still one of Finland's best-kept musical secrets. In Britain he doesn't have the star status of a Saariaho, the cutting-edge glam of a Lindberg or the angelic visitations of a Rautavaara. But his music might well outlast them all. He is Finland's foremost symphonist, and each work functions, in myriad ways, rather like a concerto for orchestra. His daringly imaginative music is immediately approachable, yet full of strange mysteries. The *Clarinet Concerto*, which received its world premiere in London on Saturday, is a work of beguiling beauty and huge excitement.

*The Times* 25 April 2006 / *Hilary Finch*

Premiere: BBC SO, cond. Osmo Vänskä, sol. Martin Fröst, 22 April, London

### AHO'S POWERFUL CONTRABASSOON CONCERTO

Lewis Lipnick did very well in the often technically demanding passages, and the piece has beautiful dialogues where the sounds of the contrabassoon spread around to the other instrument groups.

*Bergens Tidende* March 2006

The best thing about Aho's work is its powerfully dramatic nature, and the music, meandering in many directions, is often very beautiful... The instrument proved itself fit for solo assignments as well, and the performance by contrabassoonist Lewis Lipnick was magnificent... Aho's idiom is heterogeneous, and the exquisitely beautiful triad chorale in the outer movements counterbalanced the massive outpouring.

*Turun Sanomat* 13 March 2006 /

*Timo Lehtovaara*

The Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra premiered **Kalevi Aho's** *Contrabassoon Concerto* in Norway on 23 February. The soloist was Lewis Lipnick and the conductor was Andrew Litton. After the premiere the concerto was heard in three Finnish cities (Turku, Lahti and Kuopio).

### GROOVY RECHBERGER

**Herman Rechberger's** good-humoured *Tobá Hanyé* was the outcome of a period spent on a scholarship at the Villa Karo in Benin and is clearly a milestone in his highly ramified output. It is built round motifs recurring in different instrument groups that together constitute a manifold unity.

*Helsingin Sanomat* 9 April 2006 /

*Samuli Tiikkaja*

Finnish premiere: Tampere PO, cond. Rolf Gupta, sol. Eija Räsänen, 7 April (Tampere Biennale)

### KORTEKANGAS CHORAL CD

**Olli Kortekangas** has yet to make the noise abroad that his standing at home would suggest, so this CD of choral music is helping to make the ground... The choral suite *Mediterranean Suite* hints at Kortekangas's tutelage with Rautavaara: radiant major chords, modally inflected, spiced with incidental dissonance.

*Finnish Music Quarterly* 4/2005 /

*Martin Anderson*

CD: Choral works; Candomino choir, cond. Tauno Satomaa (Alba NCD 27 "O mare mio")

### BEAUTIFUL SYMPHONY BY TUOMELA

The long *Symphony No. 2* [by **Tapio Tuomela**], lasting about 40 minutes, has a pleasing sound, both bright and descanty. It may evoke memories of French impressionism or Magnus Lindberg's Piano Concerto... Tuomela sheds northerly light on the winter darkness about to descend.

*Helsingin Sanomat* 4 November 2005 / *Vesa Sirén*

Premiere: Finnish RSO, cond. Eivind Aadland, 2 November 2005, Helsinki

### SANDSTRÖM'S CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

The *Christmas Oratorio* [by **Sven-David Sandström**] is a work that starts out as a hardly audible undulation and then pulsates like a rocking mantra; it opens up and closes itself like a half-remembered dream, but at the same time with a palpable physical beauty... Around the melodic duets between a soprano and a baritone the choir suddenly reveals a dazzling radiance, or rushes off

in extremely rapid figurations like a dance of the angels. All the while the orchestra's brass and percussion hint at the strange, oriental, and in places violent nature of the Christmas story.

*Dagens Nyheter* 18 December 2005 / *Martin Nyström*

The well-known Gospel is infused with new life, but it is not the only thing that is depicted. The high notes in the strings lead our associations to the icy Swedish night, behind the percussion we have a feeling of both crystal and drama... Sandström's Christmas Oratorio is well wrought and it is a beautiful work. So beautiful that it should have a self-evident place at the Christmas table.

*Sydsvenska Dagbladet* 16 December 2005 /

*Meta Alm*

Premiere: Malmö SO, Lund Vocal Ensemble (rehearsal Ingemar Månsson), cond. Mats Rondin, sol. Susanna Arvidsson, Mikael Samuelsson, 15 December 2005

### ELIASSON – A MASTER

... **Anders Eliasson** occupied the seat of honour *par excellence* with his single-movement *Sinfonia per archi*. Only a master can keep a melody going for 40 minutes without lapsing into clichés... An almost overwhelming sense of yearning swept along the conductor and the musicians in a flow that could not be stopped by the double bar line after measure 824.

*Svenska Dagbladet* 20 February 2006 /

*Carl-Gunnar Ahlén*

This is highly intense music, drawn taut in an arch form, where the high strings have the leading role... The work stresses emphatically that Anders Eliasson is a composer whose emotional strength can only be tamed by a feeling for formal balance. Niklas Willén and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, who played superbly, also seemed to be extraordinarily inspired.

*Dagens Nyheter* 20 February 2006 /

*Thomas Anderberg*

Swedish premiere: Swedish Radio SO, cond. Niklas Willén, 18 February (Stockholm New Music, Berwald Hall)

### THE BEST CHILDREN'S OPERA EVER

A wonderful version of **Erland von Koch's** *Pelle Svanslös* (Peter Tailless the Cat) that captures the greatness of the best Swedish children's opera ever both in its detail and as a whole.

*Tidningen Ängermanland* 1 February 2006 /

*Lars Landström*

Kapellsberg Music School, Härnösand, Sweden, 31 January

## CAPTIVATING BEAUTY

I have listened to many premieres of modern music, but seldom has a work spontaneously given me so much captivating beauty in orchestral attire, and a solo part that has revealed so much of the instrument's hidden intrinsic forces as this solo concerto [by **Rolf Martinsson**] ... The work (*Flute Concerto No. 1 "Shimmering Blue"*) opened my senses and allowed an almost unbounded assimilation of sound... As for the glissando effects in the flute part, similar to blue notes, they proved just as exciting and surprising as the composer, too, had thought they would.

*Västerbottenskuriren* September 2005 / *Bengt Hultman*

Premiere: Norrlandsopera SO, cond. Paul Watkins, sol. Magnus Båge, 1 September 2005, Umeå

## LINDBERG'S REQUIEM IN HANOVER

**Nils Lindberg** doesn't just put together a classical choir with a Big Band, he also succeeds in uniting the contrasts between these two ensembles ... *The Requiem* sounded in an absolutely outstanding version... The Sanctus, for instance, impressed with its synthesis of exciting big band sounds and supreme choral setting. It is not often you experience a Requiem followed by an encore... Ovarations for the musicians and the composer.

*Hannoversche Allgemeine* 22 November 2005 / *Stefan Arndt*

Hanover Big Band, Choir of the University of Music in Berlin, cond. Michael Betzner and Lothar Krist, 20 November 2005, Hanover

## A JOKER'S TALES

This is a rare opportunity to see how the humble recorder fares in front of a full modern symphony orchestra. ... **Daniel Börtz's** work [*A Joker's Tales*] came about as a commission from the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, and pulls no punches with a rhythmic, machine-like tutti opening whose powerful sound is easily penetrated by a soprano recorder. As the composer says, 'the Joker's little whistle' turns 'the full sonic weight of the orchestra upside down'. The composer also goes on to mention that 'combining a single recorder often demands unusual and innovative solutions in terms of orchestration'. This is fair, but Börtz also solves the problem with an extended solo for low recorder, and by leaving the orchestra its own extended tutti. The recorder is also mixed with some delightfully scored percussion sections, sometimes growing out of, or answering more fragmentary orchestral statements. After an expansive and solemn final

orchestral chorale, the soprano recorder trips in once more, cheekily turning the final moments into a departure, much as the opening was very much an arrival.

*MusicWeb March 2006 / Dominy Clements*

CD: Royal Stockholm PO, cond. Alan Gilbert, sol. Dan Laurin, recorder (BIS-CD-1425)



## STANDING OVATIONS FOR HÖGBERG

**Fredrik Högberg's** First Trumpet Concerto, *The Poem*, was given a very inspired premiere by Ole Edvard Antonsen and the Norrlandsopera Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Andrea Quinn on 3 November last year. The first performance was nothing short of a formidable success. The theatrical, strictly comic features were executed with a great deal of charm by the world-famous Norwegian trumpeter Antonsen, who was rewarded by the audience for his efforts. Standing ovations, whistling and enthusiastic cheering were the immediate reactions after the concert, and the audience would not yield until Högberg and Antonsen had appeared on stage two or three times. The newspaper *Västerbottenskuriren* reported the following:

"The Poem reflects the composer's playfulness and unbiased attitude towards composing, and at times the sparks flew."

"Ole Edvard Antonsen has complete mastery over his instrument, even in passages that are clearly inspired by jazz; and his well-balanced vibratos in slow sequences were overpoweringly beautiful."

"The substantial orchestra part was dominated by glorious rhythmical elements, a humorous interplay, to say nothing of the dialogue between the conductor, certain members of the orchestra and the soloist himself. In one short section it was an outright circus act."

"This was totally refreshing and a great success for the orchestra, the soloist and the composer."

## CHAMBER & INSTRUMENTAL

### FREDRIK HÖGBERG

#### THE BUBBLE TUNE

for accordion and organ  
GE 10789

### INGVAR LIDHOLM

#### ARABESQUE

for oboe (clarinet, soprano saxophone) solo  
GE 10531

## CHORAL

### OLLI KORTEKANGAS

#### HARMONY

for descant choir  
Text: Olli Kortekangas (after "I Ching", English)  
A new work commissioned for the Florilege Vocal de Tours choral event to be premiered in their 2006 program.

ISMN M-55009-358-4

### INGVAR LIDHOLM

#### MADONNANS VAGGVISA/LULLABY OF THE MADONNA

for solo voice and mixed choir a cappella  
Text: Lope de Vega (Swedish/English)

GE10626

### JÖRGEN DAFGÅRD

#### MY GARDEN – LIKE THE BEACH

for mixed choir a cappella  
Text: Emily Dickinson (English)  
GE 10681

### FREDRIK SIXTEN

#### O SACRUM CONVIVIUM

for mixed choir a cappella  
Text: Thomas ab Aquino (Latin)  
GE 10851

### SVEN-DAVID SANDSTRÖM

#### KOMM, JESU, KOMM

for double mixed choir a cappella  
Text: Paul Thymich (German)  
GE 10852

### FIVE PICTURES FROM THE BIBLE

for baritone solo and six part mixed choir a cappella

Text: from the Bible (English)  
GE 10853

### KJELL PERDER

#### LÅNGT BORTOM...

for trombone/cello and mixed choir  
text: Hjalmar Gullberg (Swedish)  
GE 10787

## ORCHESTRAL

### JÖRGEN DAFGÅRD

#### VEILS

for orchestra  
GE 10682 (score)

### KJELL PERDER

#### RECLAIM THE RHYTHM

for orchestra  
GE 10791 (score)

### SVEN-DAVID SANDSTRÖM

#### NAKNA, KALLA

for mixed choir and string orchestra  
GE 10781 (score)

### PSALM 139

for string orchestra  
GE 10784 (score)



## Solo Guitar Works by KAI NIEMINEN

I first met **Kai Nieminen** whilst taking part in a guitar festival in Sweden in the late 1990's. It quickly became clear that we thought along similar lines in terms of music, and shared certain preferences in composers such as the Japanese **Toru Takemitsu**, and the British Impressionist composer **Frederick Delius**.

Kai mentioned he had been working on a number of guitar solo compositions for a number of years and upon looking through these it became clear that here was somebody with something to say, that music was to him an important means of expressing the moods and atmospheres found in nature, both human nature, and the natural world itself. Indeed, his music reveals the full range of

emotions, from pagan rhythms through to the majesty of a glorious sunset, from the ominous rumble of distant thunder, to the loneliness of the far north, the area in fact where he spent his formative years.

Kai Nieminen has an intense awareness of colours, and the possibilities of expressing these on the classical guitar, an instrument on which he is himself a fine performer, and it has been an education for me to have the privilege of working on these pieces, and to assist where it was felt necessary by the composer in terms of very small alterations or alternative fingering to bring out certain details. These pieces cover a period of many years and this lovely collection (*See: New CDs*) consisting of the "Aquarelles of the Night" together with the two pairs of Homages form a substantial body of guitar compositions which I feel sure will receive great popularity both with players and the concert-going public.

*John Mills*

The following five publications for guitar solo are available on CD issued by Pilfink Records (John Mills, guitar). The last on the list, *Night Sonata (three visual compositions dedicated to painters)* is available on DVD Video by Dovitra Productions (Olli Hirvanen, guitar).

### ACQUARELLI DELLA NOTTE

ISMN M-55009-368-3

### ESTAMPES

Frank Martin in Memoriam  
ISMN M-55009-366-9

### THE TEMPLE

ISMN M-55009-364-2

### FRAGMENTOS DE LA VIDA DEL MAR

Homenaje a Joaquín Turina  
ISMN M-55009-367-6

### HOMENAJE A ANDRÉS SEGOVIA

ISMN M-55009-365-2

### NIGHT SONATA

1. Night Preludes (Homage to Joan Miró)
  2. Gnomes of the Night (Homage to Marc Chagall)
  3. Night Poems in a Clockshop (Homage to Dalí)
- ISMN M-55009-369-0



Kai Nieminen and John Mills

# NEW CDs & DVDs

**Hugo Alfvén:**

Festival Overture, Op. 52  
Iceland SO, cond. Niklas Willén  
Naxos 8.557284 ("Symphony No. 4 – From the Outermost Skerries")

**Erik Bergman:**

Vier Galgenlieder  
Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir,  
cond. Paul Hillier  
Harmonia Mundi HMU907391

**Erik Bergman:**

Med dig (With You)

**Olli Kortekangas:**

Syvä ilo (Profounf Joy) etc.

**Gösta Nystroem:**

Sånger vid havet  
Margit Westerlund (alto), Collin Hansen (piano)  
Fuga 9125 ("Med dig")

**Daniel Börtz:**

A Joker's Tales  
Royal Stockholm PO, cond. Alan Gilbert,  
sol. Dan Laurin, recorder  
BIS-CD-1425

**Kimmo Hakola:**

Clarinet Concerto, Verdoyances crepuscules,  
Diamond Street  
Finnish Radio SO, cond. Sakari Oramo,  
sol. Kari Kriikku  
Ondine ODE 1063-2

**Erland von Koch:**

Den första vårdagen

**Bo Nilsson:**

Nej, kyss mig nu, Du ler, Ur en ordbok,  
Der Glückliche

**Allan Pettersson:**

Vintervisa

**Nina Åkerblom Nielsen:**

Shir hashirim – Sångernas sång  
RilkeEnsemblen, cond. Gunnar Eriksson  
Caprice CAP 21738

**Leevi Madetoja:**

Orchestral Works 5: Kullervo Overture,  
Väinämöisen kylvä (Väinämöinen Sows  
the Wilderness), Little Suite Op. 12,  
Syksy (Autumn), Okon Fuoko Suite II  
Oulu SO, cond. Arvo Volmer,  
sol. Tuomas Katajala (tenor),  
Kirsi Tiihonen (sopr.)  
Alba CD 211 ("A Sea of Stars")

**Kai Nieminen:**

Acquarelli della notte, Homenage á Andres Segovia,  
Fragmentos de la vida del mar, Estampes, The Temple,  
Acquarelli della notte II  
John Mills, guitar  
Pifink Records JJVCD-24

**Night Sonata (Night Dreams for Guitar)**

Three visual compositions for guitar  
Olli Hirvanen, guitar  
Dovitra Productions DVD Video 109A

**Einojuhani Rautavaara:**

The Gift of the Magi (Tietäjän lahja), a Christmas opera  
Tapiola Sinfonietta, cond. Petri Sakari, sol. Pia Freund,  
Jaakko Kortekangas  
Arthaus Music DVD Video 100 419

**Katedralen (The Cathedral)**

Barents Kammarkör, cond. Erik Westberg  
Caprice CAP 21752

**Aulis Sallinen:**

Violin Concerto & other works  
Rhineland-Palatinate State PO, cond. Ari Rasilainen,  
sol. Jaakko Kuusisto  
CPO 999 972-2

**Sven-David Sandström:**

Ave Maris Stella, Freedom Mass, Procession Music,  
Ordinary Mass and Psalm  
Allmäna Sängen, The Linné Quintet, cond. Cecilia Rydinger Alin  
Caprice CAP 21721

**Jean Sibelius:**

Overture in E major, Scène de ballet, Väinön virsi  
(Väinämöinen's Song) etc.  
Lahti SO, Dominante Choir, cond. Osmo Vänskä  
BIS-CD-1565

**Eduard Tubin:**

Kratt (complete ballet music), Sinfonietta on Estonian Motifs  
Estonian National SO, cond. Arvo Volmer  
ALBA ABCD 195: 1–2

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