

# 8 MAY

WEDNESDAY SERIES 15

Helsinki Music Centre at 7 pm

## SOUTHERN EUROPEAN TOUR SEND-OFF CONCERT

**Hannu Lintu**, conductor

**Nikolai Lugansky**, piano

*Jean Sibelius: Pohjola's Daughter, symphonic fantasy, Op. 49* 15 min

*Pyotr Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 1 in B Flat Minor,  
Op. 23*

33 min

*I Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso – Allegro con spirito  
II Andantino semplice – Prestissimo – Tempo 1  
III Allegro con fuoco*

INTERVAL 20 min

*Jean Sibelius: Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43*

42 min

*I Allegretto  
II Tempo andante, ma rubato – Andante sostenuto  
III Vivacissimo – Lento e suave – Largamente (attacca)  
IV Finale (Allegro moderato)*

Interval at about 20.00. The concert ends at about 21.10.

Broadcast live at [yle.fi/rso](http://yle.fi/rso).

Yle Radio 1 will be broadcasting the same concert live from Zaragoza on 13 May 2013 at 21.15.

## JEAN SIBELIUS (1865–1957): POHJOLA'S DAUGHTER, OP. 49

Sibelius based his symphonic fantasy *Pohjola's Daughter* on the eighth canto of the Finnish national epic, *The Kalevala*, telling of how wise old Väinämöinen travels to the North (Pohjola) to woo its Daughter. The music does not actually tell the story: it merely alludes to it. Rich in ostinatos and recurring figures, the material has an air of shamanistic magic. The sparkling, virtuosic orchestral texture is at odds with the bleak, primitive ambience. The music also brings out the mythical contrasts between south and north (east and west), male and female, old and young, earthly and heavenly.

In structure, *Pohjola's Daughter* is a liberal application of sonata form set in motion by a meditative solo cello with low-woodwind accompaniment. The woodwinds then herald in a faster tempo and playful, scherzando-like figures. These culminate in bold brass fanfares that nevertheless subside on ethereal, static strains evocative of the Daughter of the North. The development rises from the mythical depths, introducing new themes that grow organically from what has gone before. Again and again the suitor's overtures are rejected and even the last desperate attempt tries in vain to catch a fading dream.

The conclusion reflects the work's modernist spirit: a cautious string motif that climbs higher and higher, only to receive a final, morose rebuff from the cellos and basses.

## PYOTR TCHAIKOVSKY (1840–1893): PIANO CONCERTO NO. 1 IN B FLAT MINOR, OP. 23

Piano Concerto No. 1 by Pyotr Tchaikovsky is one of the most popular works ever composed. Tchaikovsky wrote it in 1874.

The massive double octaves in the outer movements and the top-speed *prestissimo* in the Scherzo section of the second movement can only be managed by an outstanding pianist. The virtuoso writing was also new at the time: torrents of notes and thundering chords that well forth from the music's very soul from the very first bars onwards. Equally ingenious is the arrangement of the solo and orchestral parts, at times working up to a bold confrontation, only to reach heady consensus at the decisive moments.

The soloist emerges from the torrent as an aristocratic man-of-the-world reminiscent of Pushkin's Eugene Onegin. This is particularly marked in the symphonically-cast first movement, in which Tchaikovsky cleverly intersperses his dramatic build-ups with moments of lyrical and meditative restraint.

The clear, simple melody of the slow movement steps aside for a moment to make way for an effervescent sprint in the middle. The no-nonsense finale contrasts a temperamental and (folk-) dance-like main theme with a singing second theme that builds up to a magnificent climax. For the cadenza, the soloist is allowed to show off in thundering octaves, and the orchestra ma-

kes a final dash for the finishing line with virtuosic comments from the soloist.

## JEAN SIBELIUS: SYMPHONY NO. 2 IN D MAJOR, OP. 43

The second symphony by Jean Sibelius, premiered in 1902, was his biggest success in his life to date. He rejected attempts to explain it as being a description of Finland's fight for political independence, preferring a looser interpretation as the unconscious intrusion of history into 'absolute' music.

The first movement is Sibelius's most perfect symphonic sonata *allegro*. The gloomy mood of the second movement is set by restless and increasingly despairing cello and bass pizzicatos that burst out into melodramatic fanfares. The hymn-like second theme on oboe and clarinet has a melancholy serenity the bleak beauty of which is repeatedly forced to yield to the tragic main section. In some of his sketches, Sibelius marked the slow theme "Christ". At the end, the convulsive struggle ends in an impasse and the final pizzicatos sound inconsolable and drained of energy.

Classical clarity is again a feature of the Scherzo. The boisterous main section is contrasted in the conventional manner by a poetic Trio with an unsophisticated oboe tune. From this Sibelius fashioned a bridge leading without a break to the finale.

The last movement has no real development, just a majestic song that re-

peats its victorious message again and again. The finale is one of the ultimate triumphs of Romantic music, a crescendo that grows with hypnotic certainty, melodic splendour and mighty fanfares. It is a movement that speaks to listeners ignorant of Finland's history just as much as to Finns. The whole symphony has a symbolic charge regardless of the message attributed to it. Sibelius cannot, perhaps, be held accountable for the private and communal dreams his music arouses, but they can always be relived in the closing section of his second symphony.

Antti Häyrynen (abridged)

## HANNU LINTU

Chief Conductor Designate of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra for a term beginning in 2013, and for the year leading up to this its Principal Guest Conductor, Hannu Lintu will be continuing his fruitful collaboration with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra for many years to come.

Hannu Lintu studied in the Sibelius Academy's conducting class taught by Jorma Panula, Eri Klas and Ilja Musin. He has further been tutored by, among others, Myung Whun Chung at the Music Academy Siena. Winner of the Nordic Conducting Competition in Bergen in 1994, he graduated from the Sibelius Academy in spring 1996.

Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra until spring 2013, Hannu Lintu is also

Principal Guest Conductor of the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra in Dublin. Previously he had held the positions of Chief Conductor of the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra and Artistic Director of the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra. He also works regularly with the Avanti! Chamber Orchestra and was Artistic Director of its Summer Sounds festival in 2005. Discs by Hannu Lintu have been released on the Ondine, Alba, Naxos, Ricordi, Claves, Hyperion and Danacord labels. Major forthcoming projects include recordings of the complete Mozart Piano Concertos with Angela Hewitt and the complete Enescu Symphonies. Mr. Lintu will also be recording extensively with the FRSO.

In addition to conducting the leading Finnish orchestras, Maestro Lintu has made guest appearances with the Radio Orchestras in Berlin, Paris, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Amsterdam and Madrid, with a number of orchestras in North and South America (such as the Toronto, Houston, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh and St. Louis Symphony Orchestras, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl), in Asia (Tokyo and Kuala Lumpur) and Australia (the Sydney and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras and others). Forthcoming engagements for the 2012/2013 season include appearances with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic, the Minnesota Orchestra, the NDR Symphony Orchestra and many of the BBC orchestras.

## NIKOLAI LUGANSKY

Highlights of Nikolai Lugansky's present and forthcoming seasons include projects with the New York Philharmonic, the Orchestre de Paris, the Bamberg Symphony, the London Symphony and the St. Petersburg Philharmonic. In recital and chamber performances, he appears at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, London's Wigmore Hall and the Konzerthaus Berlin. He regularly features at some of the world's most distinguished festivals, including the BBC Proms, Verbier and Edinburgh. In May he will appear with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra on its tour of Southern Europe.

Last season saw Nikolai Lugansky's debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as well as performances with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, the Mariinsky Theatre Symphony Orchestra, the NHK Symphony Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra. He also made his recital debut at the Vienna Konzerthaus and toured with the London Philharmonic.

An acclaimed recording artist, Nikolai Lugansky records exclusively for the Naïve-Ambroisie label. His most recent recording, featuring Rachmaninoff's two Piano Sonatas, was released in autumn 2012 and won the Diapason d'Or. He was the winner of the BBC Music Magazine Award for his Deutsche Grammophon recording with violinist Vadim Repin and received an ECHO Klassik prize for his 2005 recording of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concertos Nos. 2 & 4.

# THE FINNISH RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra (FRSO) is the orchestra of the Finnish Broadcasting Company (yle). Its mission is to produce and promote Finnish musical culture. Its Chief Conductor as of autumn 2013 will be Hannu Lintu, following a season (2012/2013) as the orchestra's Principal Guest Conductor. The FRSO has two Honorary Conductors: Jukka-Pekka Saraste and Sakari Oramo.

The Radio Orchestra of ten players founded in 1927 grew to symphony orchestra strength in the 1960s. Its previous Chief Conductors have been Toivo Haapanen, Nils-Eric Fougstedt, Paavo Berglund, Okko Kamu, Leif Segerstam, Jukka-Pekka Saraste and Sakari Oramo.

The latest contemporary music is a major item in the repertoire of the FRSO, which each year premieres a number of yle commissions. Another of the orchestra's tasks is to record all Finnish orchestral music for the yle archive. During the 2012/2013 season it will premiere six works commissioned by yle.

The FRSO has recorded works by Eötvös, Nielsen, Hakola, Lindberg, Saariaho, Sallinen, Kaipainen, Kokkonen and others, and the debut disc of the opera *Aslak Hetta* by Armas Launis. Its discs have reaped some major distinctions, such as the BBC Music Magazine Award and the Académie Charles Cros Award. The disc of the Sibelius and Lindberg Violin Concertos (Sony BMG) with Lisa Batiashvili as the soloist re-

ceived the MIDEM Classical Award in 2008, in which year the New York Times chose the other Lindberg disc as its Record of the Year.

The FRSO regularly tours to all parts of the world. During the 2012/2013 season it will be heading for Eastern Finland and Southern Europe.

All the FRSO concerts both in Finland and abroad are broadcast, usually live, on yle Radio 1. They can also be heard and watched with excellent live stream quality on the FRSO website ([yle.fi/rso](http://yle.fi/rso)).