

26.1. AT 19:00
HELSINKI MUSIC CENTRE

ANDREW MANZE
CONDUCTOR

FRANCESCO PIEMONTESE
PIANO

LOTTA EMANUELSSON
PRESENTER

Maurice Ravel:

Pavane pour une infante défunte

W. A. Mozart:

Piano Concerto No. 20 in D Minor K 466

- 1. Allegro maestoso*
- 2. Andante*
- 3. Allegro assai*

Jean Sibelius:

Rakastava, Op. 14

- 1. Rakastava (The Lover)*
- 2. Rakastetun tie (The Way of the Lover)*
- 3. Hyvää iltaa... Jää hyvästi (Good Night, Farewell)*

Maurice Ravel:

Ma Mère L'Oye

- 1. Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty: Lent*
- 2. Tom Thumb: Très modéré*
- 3. Laideronnette, Empress of the Pagodas: Mouvt de marche*
- 4. Beauty and the Beast: Mouvt de valse très modéré*
- 5. The Fairy Garden: Lent et grave*

MAURICE RAVEL: PAVANE POUR UNE INFANTE DÉFUNTE

The *Pavane pour une infante défunte* (Pavane for a Dead Princess) by Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) was originally scored for piano. He composed it in 1899 and transcribed it for orchestra in 1910.

The pavane, a dance favoured at the Renaissance courts, here takes the form of a slow elegy. The king's daughter was known at the Spanish court in days gone by as The Infanta (in French 'infante'), and for Ravel, Spain represented a fairy-tale world like a subconscious childhood

landscape. For his mother came from the Basque region on the border of France and Spain. Maybe this *Pavane* is a memorial to a lost childhood.

The mournful main theme appears three times, each with variation and with two lyrical sections in between. The music has a cool, timeless quality, as if viewing impressions from a distance. Ravel is also sparing in his instrumentation but always has an unerring feel for colour, assigning the melodic main role to a French horn.

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WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART: PIANO CONCERTO NO. 20 IN D MINOR K 466

The D-minor Piano Concerto No. 20 composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) in Vienna in 1785 was, according to his father Leopold, a success. It was in fact almost the only piano concerto by his son Wolfgang Amadeus performed in the 19th century.

In the first movement, a syncopated theme on the orchestra dashes anxiously along as clouds threaten in the bass. *Forte* outbursts are met by sighs in the winds and strings, and a march theme enhances the ominous mood. The stark introduction is finally tempered by the lyrical second theme. The piano makes its entrance with a new theme. There are

flashes of drama now and then, but they are dampened by the syncopated motif and end with reconciliation.

The simple main section of the slow movement relies on a staccato piano theme, but the idyll is shattered by a passionate middle section.

The drama of the first movement returns in the finale, but now without the subjective highlights. The piano's contrapuntal opening theme is accented by comments from the orchestra. The movement culminates in a piano cadenza, after which the music switches to D major and a victorious end with fanfares on the brass.

JEAN SIBELIUS: RAKASTAVA, OP. 14

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957) wrote his three-movement *Rakastava* (The Lover) suite in 1893, originally for male choir. He later arranged versions for male choir and orchestra, for unaccompanied mixed choir, and for strings and percussion. The string version is bathed in the light and subtle eroticism of the northern summer night. In the first movement, a portrait of the lover, Sibelius allows the rich string texture to dominate. The poem in the choir version speaks of impatient anticipation.

In *The Way of the Lover*, triplet figures create an impression of unceasing movement as the lover rushes to his rendezvous. Six soft tings on a triangle announce his arrival.

The finale, *Good Night, Farewell*, is the longest of the three movements and itself divided into three sections. In the first poem, the lovers are highly attentive to each other; the second expresses fulfillment and the third parting.

In the orchestral version, a solo violin supported by cello and orchestra first presents a melody suggestive of parting. The restless middle section underlines the lovers' farewell, and the bittersweet closing section is a supreme example of Sibelius's writing for strings.

MAURICE RAVEL: MOTHER GOOSE (MA MÈRE L'OYE)

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) was one of the first composers to peep into what was then a novel childhood world. The child in his works experiences without any moralising or patronising. Ravel based his *Mother Goose* suite mainly on the fairytales of Charles Perrault, as a duet for two pianos in 1908 and an arrangement for orchestra in 1911. Though the orchestra is not very big, it does, for example, have an elegantly-handled percussion section.

The opening *Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty* exudes a tender melancholy, being careful not to wake her as she sweetly slumbers.

4 *Tom Thumb* tries to ensure he will find his way home by sprinkling breadcrumbs along his path. The faltering time changes and groping melody speak of his uncertainty.

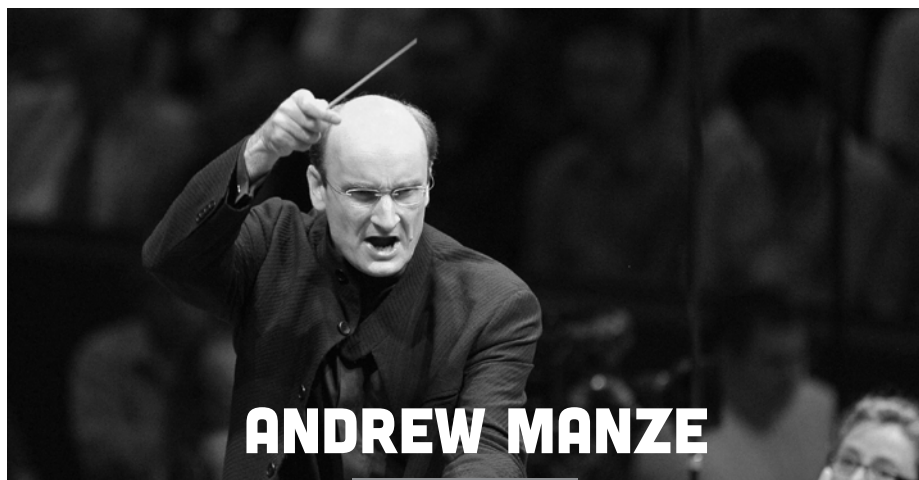
A solemn pentatonic melody prepares the way for an oriental ceremony as

Laideronnette, Empress of the Pagodas, prepares to take her bath in the company of her courtiers. Like childhood and dreams, the Orient was for Ravel a land of opportunity.

Ravel dedicated *Beauty and the Beast* to Erik Satie, a French composer fascinated by grotesque encounters. A graceful clarinet waltz is here hassled by a gruff double-bassoon. Their ill-matched dance nevertheless has the hoped-for outcome as a swooping harp crescendo shifts the Beast's bassoon theme to the top register of a violin (the Beauty). A kiss has turned the Beast into a Prince.

In the final movement (*The Fairy Garden*), the Sleeping Beauty is awakened by the Prince's kiss and finds herself in a magic garden. Cast in the leading role is a string texture coloured with nostalgia with which Ravel brings the spirit of childhood back to life.

*Programme notes by Antti Häyrynen
translated (abridged) by Susan Sinisalo*



Andrew Manze is a British conductor. He has been Chief Conductor of the NDR Radiophilharmonie, Hannover since 2014 and is Principal Guest Conductor of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. Beginning his career as a violinist, he rapidly became a leading specialist in historical performance practice. He was Associate Director of the Academy of Ancient Music 1996–2003 and Artistic Director of The English Concert 2003–2007. Since then, he has concentrated above all on Classical-Romantic and 20th-century repertoire. He was Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra 2006–2014 and Associate Guest Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra 2010–2014.

Manze has long-standing relationships with leading orchestras that include the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Camerata Salzburg and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Recent and upcoming guest conducting highlights include engagements with the Los Angeles Philharmonic,

Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony and London Philharmonic.

With the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra Manze made a number of recordings, including the complete Brahms symphonies, with the NDR Philharmonic the full Mendelssohn cycle (the first release of which won a Deutsche Schallplattenkritik award), and with the Liverpool Orchestra all the Vaughan Williams symphonies. He has also recorded early music and works by Mozart, Beethoven, Lars-Erik Larsson, Britten and others.



FRANCESCO PIEMONTESE

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“A combination of superlative technique and extraordinary taste,” wrote the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* of Francesco Piemontesi in 2011. Though possibly best known as a Mozart player, he is also renowned for his performances of Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Liszt, Ravel, Debussy and Bartók.

Born in Locarno, Francesco Piemontesi studied with Arie Vardi before working with Alfred Brendel, Murray Perahia, Cécile Ousset and Alexis Weissenberg. Of one of his great teachers and mentors, Alfred Brendel, Piemontesi says that Brendel taught him “to love the detail of things”. He rose to international prominence with prizes at several major competitions, including the 2007 Queen Elisabeth, and between 2009 and 2011 he

was a BBC New Generation Artist. His recital disc of music by Handel, Brahms, Bach and Liszt won BBC Music Magazine’s rising star award in 2012. Other composers recorded by him have included Mozart, Schubert, Schumann, Dvořák, Debussy and Frank Martin.

Francesco Piemontesi appears with major ensembles in Europe (London, Vienna, Paris), the USA (Los Angeles, Boston, Pittsburgh) and Asia (Tokyo). He made his debut with the Berlin Philharmonic in 2020 and regularly appears in recital and in chamber repertoire. He is Artistic Director of the *Settimane Musicali di Ascona* and was Artist-in-Residence at the *Orchestre de la Suisse Romande* in Geneva during the 2020/2021 season.

THE FINNISH RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra (FRSO) is the orchestra of the Finnish Broadcasting Company (Yle), and its mission is to produce and promote Finnish musical culture.

The Radio Orchestra of ten players founded in 1927 grew to symphony orchestra proportions in the 1960s. Its Chief Conductors have been Toivo Haapanen, Nils-Eric Fougstedt, Paavo Berglund, Okko Kamu, Leif Segerstam, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Sakari Oramo, Hannu Lintu, and as of autumn 2021 Nicholas Collon.

In addition to the great Classical-Romantic masterpieces, the latest contemporary music is a major item in the repertoire of the FRSO, which each year premieres a number of Yle commissions. During the 2021/2022 season it will premiere six new works.

Another of the orchestra's tasks is to record all Finnish orchestral music for the Yle archive.

The FRSO has recorded works by Mahler, Bartók, Sibelius, Hakola, Lindberg, Saariaho, Sallinen, Kaipainen, Kokkonen and others. It has twice won a Gramophone Award: for its disc of Lindberg's Clarinet Concerto in 2006 and of Bartók Violin Concertos in 2018. Other distinctions have included BBC Music Magazine, Académie Charles Cros, MIDEM Classical awards and Grammy nominations in 2020 and 2021. Its disc of tone poems and songs by

Sibelius won an International Classical Music Award (ICMA) in 2018, and it has been the recipient of a Finnish EMMA award in 2016 and 2019.

FRSO concerts are broadcast live on the Yle Areena and Radio 1 channels, and later on the same evening on the Yle Teema TV channel. Recordings of the concerts are also shown on Yle TV 1.