

Seven questions for **EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA**



Einojuhani Rautavaara
(Photo: Heikki Tuuli)

1) Can you tell us about the grammar of your music and your compositional process?

The impulse for a work often comes from some text with a strong atmosphere. The text may be just a couple of words, like ‘fire sermon’, ‘angel of light’ or ‘annunciation’. The words are often used as the title for the piece born around them. The second step is to choose the material I think will be right for that atmosphere (modal scales, 12-tone rows, symmetric harmonies, etc). The third step is to follow my intuition while using the chosen material. But I nevertheless be-

lieve that a work of art is unpredictable and creates its own laws.

2) What do you hope to communicate through your music?

I do not use my music to communicate or propagate. The music uses me – to emerge.

3) Your career is often said to be divided into at least four stylistic periods. What motivated them, and what future changes do you anticipate?

In my youth I thought it was my duty to learn all the contemporary techniques and

methods of “modernism”. The only way to learn them was to compose using them. It took all this to find my own mode of expression.



4) What musical elements do you draw on to convey mysticism in your music?

Mysticism is only an exceptionally intensive way of experiencing reality.

5) What do you want music students to know about your music?

That freedom in art means freedom to choose your discipline. That music without melody can be interesting, even beautiful – but it is so hopelessly untalented.

6) Can you recommend a few pieces for students to study?

Symphonies 7 “Angel of Light”  and 8 “The Journey” (for how to create symphonic coherence). Angels and Visitations (for how to build the structure on contrasts). Cantus arcticus  (for Nordic atmosphere).

7) What projects have you been working on?

At present I am writing a large opera based on texts by Federico García Lorca. But there are other things, too. In spring I completed an orchestral suite called “Tapestry of Life”.

 Sound samples are available at www.fennicagehrman.fi (highlights)