

Photo: Anne Hjelenberg



Mats Larsson Gothe and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra

Anger and violent outbursts in Larsson Gothe's symphony

One can really hear the anger in this symphony... The frustration is shrill and loud as in Shostakovich's most warlike moments, or even in Anders Eliasson's music. Not least in the typical contrasts between violent outbursts and points of rest that Larsson Gothe has cultivated also in his earlier symphonies.

Dagens Nyheter 1.9.

Mats Larsson Gothe: Symphony No. 4

Swedish Radio SO/Marta Gardolinska, 31.8.2024 Stockholm, Sweden



Herbert Blomstedt and the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic

Phenomenal Berwald performance

Herbert Blomstedt knew exactly what he was doing when he sensitively sculptured forth the music with his hands, as if it were a fragile vase. The Royal Philharmonic's phenomenal performance [of Reminiscences of the Norwegian Mountains] offered a dynamic promenade among impressions of Nordic folk music, dramatic sadness and quivering wonder when confronted with a motif painted with both saturated colours and fluctuations of light... Sinfonie capricieuse preserved for posterity in the form of sketches, can nevertheless be considered somewhat of a rediscovery. It is music characterised by a curiosity about what is happening around the next corner; and capricious is exactly what the title means. *Dagens Nyheter* 12.9.

Franz Berwald: Minnen från de norska fjällen (Reminiscences of the Norwegian Mountains), Sinfonie capricieuse

Royal Stockholm PO/Herbert Blomstedt, 11.9.2024 Stockholm, Sweden

Photo: Penthouse Studios



Lara Poe

Luminous Lara Poe premiere at the Proms

Thrillingly orchestrated with a fresh ear for instrumental sonorities... Under Oramo the score teemed and glistened, both nostalgic and pleasingly novel at the same time. Poe was there to acknowledge the genuine ovation. I hope to hear the work live again soon.

Classicalsource.com 8-2024

Poe's musical language is captivating, with inventive orchestrations supporting an expansive piece of storytelling... Lara Poe's appealing musical language in *Songs from the Countryside* opens the door to discovering more large-scale works from both her back catalogue and forthcoming commissions.

Thoroughly Good 26.8.

Luminous Finnish premiere for Lara Poe's absorbing new song cycle... Grasping Poe's wondrous vocal lines in their myriad detail, Komsa embraced the text-settings with committed artistry.

Adventures in Music 4.9.

Lara Poe: *Laulut maaseudulta* (*Songs from the Countryside*) for soprano and orchestra

World premiere: Sibelius Academy and Royal College of Music Orchestras/Sakari Oramo, sol. Anu Komsa, 25.8.2024 London, UK (Proms)

Seductive choral music

These immensely beautiful choral works charmed the audience with their readily accessible language delivered in an elegant state of grace. *crescendo-magazine.be* 6.9. Both Rautavaara's and – to a greater extent – Aho's cluster-like harmonies echo delicately and fade away in a perfect purity of sound. *pizzicato.lu* 29.8.

Einojuhani Rautavaara, Kalevi Aho: Choral works

CD: Helsinki Chamber Choir/Nils Schwenckendiek (BIS-2692)



Photo: Iiro Ahonen

Remarkable concerto by Lintinen

What makes this album stand out is Lee's performance of Kirmo Lintinen's four-movement Cello Concerto. His playing is outstanding, but this work, being unfamiliar to most listeners, is the most intriguing part of the album. *New in music this week* 17.5.

Kirmo Lintinen: Cello Concerto

CD: English CO/Emilia Hoving, sol. Trey Lee (Signum SIGCD791 'Seasons Interrupted')

Damström's compelling work

Performed with full-on virtuosity and poetic musicality by Vähälä, the solo part was rendered with formidable agility and sensitivity... Soaring in topmost registers here and glowing in heated groove there, Damström's compelling violin lines were ever rendered with awe-inspiring mastery and commitment, while the Itkonen-led ensemble responded in equal measure, tackling the score with focused intensity and all-around musicality. Beautifully aligned and balanced, TampereRaw and Vähälä served the score with a powerhouse reading. *Adventures in Music* 20.9.

Cecilia Damström: Earth Songs

World premiere: TampereRaw/Maria Itkonen, sol. Elina Vähälä, vln, 18.9.2024 Tampere, Finland



Photo: Maanti Kyösti

Zeng – a charmer

Zeng (for recorder, percussion and strings) is a wonderful addition to the concerto repertoire, lending itself to smaller-scale ensembles. Recorded with finesse, this performance is a charmer. *Finnish Music Quarterly* 8-2024

Lotta Wennäkoski: Hele, Päärme, Zeng, I stället för vingar, Kuule II

CD: Avanti! Chamber Orchestra (Alba ABCD 529 'Zeng')



Photo: Frankfurt Chamber Opera

Sanatorio Express – a highly amusing hit

Iiro Rantala, the enterprising jazz pianist and representative of a probably typically Finnish penchant for self-irony, has succeeded with this chamber opera in two acts in creating an absurd social critique.

... This new production by the Chamber Opera Frankfurt leaves little to be desired musically or scenically. Conductor Stanislav Rosenberg must be credited with a nuanced interpretation of the score, sensitively and highly motivated by the orchestra, never abandoning the classical style of the genre for a few modern-sounding avant-garde gestures. That Rantala understands the melody and knows how to use instruments effectively as sound painters was adequately utilized by all ten protagonists on stage.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 14.7.

Rantala's wonderfully melodic music, its libretto packed with humour and the successful Frankfurt production made a great impression. Such is a modern opera! *Opernmagazin Orpheus* Sept-Oct 2024

Iiro Rantala - Minna Lindgren: Sanatorio Express – Chamber opera in two acts

German premiere: Chamber Opera Frankfurt/Stsanislav Rosenberg, sol. Annette Fischer, David Jakob Schläger etc., 17.7.2024 Frankfurt, Germany

Unfailing faith in the classical ideal of beauty

Alex Freeman writes beautiful and ostensibly uncomplicated music... The brand-new piano concerto Wildwood was inspired by the ecological reflections of Roger Deakin in a book of essays of the same name. Despite its ecological message, I took Wildwood to be a somewhat classically-constructed piano concerto, with its overall three-movement format, asserted outer movements sur-

rounding a more introverted, quietly contemplative middle one. Risto-Matti Marin gave his utmost to ensure a perfect performance of the virtuoso solo part. *Hufvudstadsbladet* 16.9.

Alex Freeman: Wildwood for piano and chamber ensemble

World premiere: Zagros/Petri Komulainen, sol. Risto-Matti Marin, 14.9. Helsinki, Finland (Focus Alex Freeman)



Photo: Ville Tampas