

# Erkki Melartin jubilee



*On 7 February next year, 150 years will have passed since the birth of Finnish composer Erkki Melartin (1875–1937). The occasion will be celebrated each month during the jubilee year with events, exhibitions and concerts in different parts of Finland.*

**M**elartin was active in just about all walks of life: composer, conductor, music theory and composition teacher, as well as principal and developer of what is now the Sibelius Academy. He was a great aesthete, a fine visual artist and widely acquainted with the history of art. He loved trees, did yoga and was a vegetarian. A fascinating individual,

his attitude to life was tempered by ill health and the constant proximity of death. As a teacher, he supported the studies and careers of those with an interest in music regardless of background and gender.

Erkki Melartin's star has been very much in the ascendance over the past 30 years, thanks both to the active work of the Melartin Society and the serious research into him carried out in the present millennium. Of major significance here has been the clean-copy project conducted by Fennica Gehрман; as a result, quality material is now available of all his six symphonies, the symphonic poem *Traumgesicht* (Nocturnal Vision, Op. 70), 🎧 the

tone poem *Marjatta* (Op. 79) and the orchestral suite from the ballet *Sininen helmi* (The Blue Pearl, Op. 160).

The first biography of Melartin by **Tuire Ranta-Meyer** is scheduled for publication on his birthday. The Sibelius Academy will receive the gift of a portrait of Melartin dating from 1922, and a gala concert will be held that evening at the building procured by him after considerable effort in 1932.

In March, there will be several concerts featuring music by him. The Lohja Orchestra and the Jyväskylä Sinfonia will perform his *Symphony No. 6*. *Symphony No. 3* will be in the repertoire of the Hyvinkää Orchestra. **Esa Ylönen** (piano) and ensemble will be playing works by **Uuno Klami**, **Helvi Leiviskä** and **Sulho Ranta**, all composition students of Melartin.

In May, the Helsinki Metropolitan Orchestra will give the premiere performance of Melartin's 24-song cycle of settings of poems by **V.A. Koskenniemi** with orchestral accompaniment. Lieder, chamber and keyboard music will be on the concert programmes at museums and music colleges, and concerts will be held at the Savonlinna Music Academy and at the Tulindberg Week in Oulu. Melartin has been chosen as Composer of the Year for the Arabia kaikuu festival in Helsinki, and his grand Wagnerian opera *Aino* (Op. 50)

🎧 is to premiere in Mikkeli and Savonlinna in January 2026. Further information is available on the Erkki Melartin Society's home page at [erkkimelartin.fi](http://erkkimelartin.fi).

Tuire Ranta-Meyer

