



Photo: Marco Berggreve

Håkan Hardenberger

## Martinsson's luxurious ride

When Hardenberger, dressed in a gold jacket, now stands playing Bridge with Martinsson's colorful orchestral apparatus behind him, it strikes me how carefree this music is. It is a luxurious ride and an arena where Håkan Hardenberger can showcase himself in his beloved role as the wonderful Håkan. Bridge is a fun piece. *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* 17.1.

### Rolf Martinsson: Bridge – Trumpet Concerto No. 1

Malmö SO/Fabien Gabel, sol. Håkan Hardenberger, tp, 16.1.2025 Malmö Sweden (Malmö SO 100th Anniversary)

## Splendid orchestral writing

The characteristic which enables Aho's music to stand out from the crowd is the remarkable consistency in its quality.... I really can't recall hearing a single Aho work I didn't like or admire in some way, or even one towards which I felt slightly indifferent... Repeated listens reveal a remarkably coherent, quintessentially Nordic work of elegance and detail [Guitar Concerto]. ...The detail and good taste of Aho's splendid orchestral writing truly comes to life in BIS's surround iteration. *MusicWeb International* Oct 2024

### Kalevi Aho: Guitar Concerto, Quintet for horn and string quartet, Contrapunctus XIV (Bach/compl. Aho)

CD: Lapland CO/John Storgårds, sol. Ismo Eskelinen, gtr, Ilkka Puputti, hn  
BIS-SACD 2666

## Highly expressive Damström

Damström is a composer who takes a stand and does not shy away from even the most difficult and heavy subjects, which does not mean that her music is heavy or difficult... She integrates modernist and more tonally colored elements in a highly personal way within the framework of her sound frescoes, which are as vibrant as they are highly expressive... Damström composes music that is effectively illustrative, yet she never spells everything out for the listener. *Hufvudstadsbladet* 10.3.

### Cecilia Damström: Nixus, Diary, Lucrum, Tundol, ICE, Wasteland

Uuden Ajan Ensemble/Tapio von Boehm, sol. Hedvig Paulig, sop, 9.3.2025 Helsinki, Finland (Cecilia Damström Festival)

## Challenging and refreshing

Listening to Staern's creations is simultaneously challenging and refreshing. Benjamin Staern is MUSIC. *OPUS* #129/2025

I am struck by the powerful expression. This is music that wants something from me – and it wants to shake me. *Kulturdelén* 21.2.

This is music that continually surprises us and still remains itself... Staern takes me to places that I would never be able to find on my own... I believe this second movement of the Clarinet Concerto is the best I have ever heard from Staern's pen... and Dornbusch is superb in the leading role. *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* 21.2.

### Benjamin Staern: Threat of War, Worried Souls, Polar Vortex – Symphony No. 1

CD: Gävle SO/Emil Eliasson, sol. Carin Dornbusch, cl  
Swedish Society SCD1190



## Congenial Dancing Fairies

The suggestive music was entirely congenial with the artwork's nocturnal image of fairies dancing in the moonlight. Mysterious sounds of nature in the misty introduction were succeeded by souging winds and clear, ethereal moon song. Michelin played heavenly... *Uppsala Nya Tidning* 31.1.

### Benjamin Staern: Älvalek (Dancing Fairies) – Flute Concerto

Uppsala CO/Jessica Cottis, sol. Laura Michelin, fl, 30.1.2025 Uppsala, Sweden



## Crazily entertaining Ele

Lotta Wennäkoski is one of Finland's successful composers. Her Ele for clarinet and strings is a crazily entertaining piece of music, packed with content and events...fun and exciting. *Jönköpings Post* 23.2.

### Lotta Wennäkoski: Ele for clarinet and string orchestra

Swedish premiere: Musica Vitae/Johannes Gustavsson, sol. Lauri Sallinen, 23.2.2025 Jönköping, Sweden



Photo: Hanna Salmela

Lara Poe

## Magical music by Lara Poe

Poe has infused her composition Kaamos with the wondrous light of the Lapland winter. It is a fascinating, delicate piece. She subtly ignites the orchestra's instruments, the glissandos soften... The work culminates in a Northern Lights landscape and ends with sparkling frosty snow. The northern winter has been captured in music. *Helsingin Sanomat* 8.12.

### Lara Poe: Kaamos

Finnish RSO/Nicholas Collon, 6.12.2024 Helsinki, Finland

Poe's work was inspired by numerous bells – and individual bells can be heard in the orchestral writing... The overall effect is surprisingly Sibelian. *Hufvudstadsbladet* 13.2.

### Lara Poe: Kun usva helisee (When the mists gently chime)

World premiere: Finnish RSO/Nathanael Iselin, 12.2.2025 Helsinki, Finland (Musica nova)



Anni Haapaniemi

Victor Nyberg

## Remarkable works

I was mesmerized by Ondine's album of orchestral works by Žibuoklė Martinaitytė, but then, that's the whole point of her music: slowly unfolding, gradually transforming, reverberating through chosen union of instruments with a combination of colossal expanse and extreme restraint... Aletheia depicts the whole life lived in a rallying cry for humanity in the face of war... Remarkable works to which the Latvian Radio Choir and Sigvards Klava bring all their unmatched qualities.

*Gramophone January 2025*

### Žibuoklė Martinaitytė: *Aletheia, Ululations, The Blue of Distance, Chant des Voyelles*

CD: Latvian Radio Choir/Sigvards Klava  
Ondine ODE 1447-2 ("Aletheia")



## Impressive, powerful images

The soloist dazzled with her technique and conveyed the composer's intentions in masterly fashion. It was easy to detect the changes in nature in the eventful texture, where the strings' flageolet notes painted the sun's rays... I was greatly impressed by the composer's ability to convey all these powerful images with his instrumentation. This work is sure to get many performances.

*Vasabladet 14.12.*

### Matthew Whittall: *Oboe Concerto 'In the New Light of Spring'*

World premiere: Vaasa CO/Tomas Djupsjöbacka, sol. Anni Haapaniemi, 13.12.2024 Vaasa, Finland

## Linjama's *Prélude oublié*

Merging the spiritual with the secular, the bright, lightly dissonant opus begins with gently rolling figures in the right-hand and rising bell-like sounds in the left. Sustaining a soft, pulsating rhythm throughout, it smoothly blends in a quotation from the Et incarnatus est section of Bach's B-minor Mass. In Pohjonen's elegant hands, the mediative setting evoked a feeling of timelessness.

*Classicalsource.com 20.2.*

### Jyrki Linjama: *Prélude oublié for piano*

World premiere: Juho Pohjonen, pf, 20.2.2025 New York, USA

## Captivating Sundblad-Halme songs

The cycle is captivating, airy, impressionistic music about the figure Pan in ancient Greek mythology... Soprano Anu Komsu and the HPO's solo flautist Niamh McKenna frolicked and played together with light, bright virtuosity.

*Helsingin Sanomat 11.12.*

### Heidi Sundblad-Halme: *Songs from the song cycle Pan (Pan ja paimenet, Pan soittaa)*

Helsinki PO/Kristian Sallinen, sol. Anu Komsu, 8.12.2024 Helsinki, Finland

## Imaginative sound bath

The music immerses the listener in an imaginative sound bath, transports the senses into a long and very serious meditation over the three aspects of love. The sensual, in "Aphrodite – Fragments of Sappho", where mezzo-soprano Ann-Kristin Jones sings long, expressive melismas while the orchestra surrounds her like a mussel shell, shimmering in every conceivable colour... In part two, Gustav Wetterbrandt's clarinet moves rather on top of the orchestra, with quivering fragments and a palette of small, subtle microtones in the vast, transparent sea of sound. The intimacy reveals that the theme is the love for your children: "A new child of infinity".

### Marie Samuelsson: *The Love Trilogy (complete)*

World premiere: Malmö SO/Geoffrey Paterson, sol. Gustav Wetterbrandt, cl, Ann-Kristin Jones, mz, 13.2.2025 Malmö, Sweden



Marie Samuelsson

Photo: Mats Bäcker

## March–June 2025

### MINNA LEINONEN

#### *Kuinkas sitten kävikään (Guess what happens next?)*

A work inspired by the Book About Moomin, Mymble and Little My  
Text and pictures: Tove Jansson (Fin)  
Tampere Filharmonia/Kimmo Tullila, dramaturgy Meri-Maija Näykki.  
recit. Ella Mettänen  
6.3. Tampere, Finland

### LOTTA WENNÄKOSKI

#### *Myös sydämeni*

Susanne Kujala, organ  
21.3. Helsinki, Finland

### MARIE SAMUELSSON

#### *Your Wild Shadow*

Emmanuel Laville, ob  
25.3. Stockholm, Sweden (Swedish Music Spring Festival)

### MATS LARSSON GOTHE

#### *Cello Concerto*

Royal Stockholm PO/Tobias Ringborg, sol. Torleif Thedéen  
10.4. Stockholm, Sweden

### TAPIO TUOMELA

#### *Pace (Peace) for mixed choir*

Text: Joh. 14:27 (Ital)  
Kaamos Chamber Choir/Visa Yrjölä  
11.4. Helsinki, Finland

### DANIEL NELSON

#### *The Rave Chronicles – Electro-mechanical concerto for player piano and analogue orchestra*

Norrlandsoperan SO/Patrik Ringborg, sol. Yamaha Disklavier  
25.4. Umeå, Sweden

### BENJAMIN STAERN

#### *Hilma Scenes (orchestral version)*

Helsingborg SO/Cathrine Winnes  
26.4. Helsingborg, Sweden

### KARIN REHNQVIST

#### *Take the Milky Way*

Helsinki Chamber Choir, Helsinki Baroque Orchestra/Niels Schwegckendiek  
26.4. Helsinki, Finland

### ESKIL KAUPPI

#### *Vingslag (Wingbeats)*

Helsingborg SO  
8.5. Helsingborg, Sweden

### EMMY LINDSTRÖM

#### *Rösaring – Concerto for Orchestra*

Swedish Radio SO/Yi-Chen Lin  
9.5. Stockholm, Sweden

### AULIS SALLINEN

#### *Shaka – Melodrama for reciter and ensemble*

cond. Jan Söderblom, recit. Matti Leino  
5.6. Naantali, Finland (Naantali Music Festival)

### KALEVI AHO

#### *String Quartet No. 5*

Kamus Quartet  
12.6. Helsinki, Finland (Lauttasaari Music Festival)

### JOHAN ULLÉN

#### *One Last Tango (Apocalypse)*

BBC Concert Orchestra/Anna-Maria Helsing  
12.6. London, UK