



Tiina Myllärinen

New chamber works by Tiina Myllärinen

The NeoQuartet commissioned a new string quartet from **Tiina Myllärinen** to be premiered on 26 October at the NeoArte Synthesizer of Arts Festival in Gdansk, Poland. Her previous quartet, *(Bad) Dreams come true* has had several performances in Finland and was also heard at the International Festival Forum for New Music in Germany.

Myllärinen is now working on a new guitar quartet commissioned by the Hochschule für Musik Würzburg and the Kekkonen Quartet. The first movement will be performed this year in Germany and the whole quartet is on the programme for the Summer Sounds Festival in Porvoo, Finland on 27 June 2026.

Awards for Wennäkoski and Martinaitytė

The 2024 Fredrik Pacius Prize was awarded to **Lotta Wennäkoski** for her bold, innovative contribution to composition. Music by her was featured at the award-giving ceremony in Helsinki on 22 May.

Žibuoklė Martinaitytė's *EKAGGATA* for violin and chamber orchestra was chosen as one of the best pieces of 2024 by a Lithuanian composer. The Lithuanian Composers' Union awarded the prizes in May to works selected by an expert commission. Violinist **Hugo Ticiati** initiated the piece and took it lovingly into the world.

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Premiere for Schnelzer's fairy tale suite

Albert Schnelzer's *Tales of Darkness and Sorrow* will be premiered at the opening concert of the Helsingborg Piano Festival on 20 August. **Magnus Larsson** conducts the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra. The work is a fairy tale suite in five tableaux focusing on the somewhat darker and more bizarre features which are also found in many well-known folk tales. The orchestral piece is moreover a homage to Ravel (on the 150th anniversary of his birth) and includes a slightly more prominent piano part.

Unusual Aho concertos

Kalevi Aho has completed a 33-minute piece for violin and Gagaku orchestra entitled *Loihtu*. This exceptional commission included a trip to Tokyo to study the Gagaku philosophy and instruments. *Loihtu* was written for the violinist **Sayaka Shoji** and the Imperial Japanese Gagaku Orchestra of 16 musicians. There will be five performances in Japan during 2026-27 and later the orchestra will perform the piece at the Venice Biennale and the new Philharmonie de Paris.

Aho has also recently written a *Concerto for Erhu and Chamber Orchestra* for **Kanae Nozawa**, a captivating musician with her expressive erhu, the "Chinese violin". The world premiere by the Lapland Chamber Orchestra is scheduled in Rovaniemi for 29 November.

Daniel Nelson festival composer

Daniel Nelson has been named this year's festival composer for the Styrö Chamber Music Days, taking place 23-25 July. The festival program features several of his works, including *The Vein Bleeds Silver* for solo violin and *Razed* for string orchestra. This year's spotlight soloist is soprano **Sofie Asplund**, who will perform Nelson's *Emily Songs* – three songs on poems by **Emily Dickinson** – in a newly arranged version for string quartet. Also on the program are *The Death & Julia*, the string trio *Jewish Proverbs*, and *Fortune Cookies Songs*.



Olli Kortekangas

Focus on Kortekangas

Music by **Olli Kortekangas** will be performed at a jubilee concert at the Helsinki Music Centre on 26 October. On the programme will be the organ sonata *Stargazer*, the premiere of a new organ sonata (No. 4, *Snow*), and the premiere of the version for large choir and organ of *Vähän ennen yötä* (Just Before Night). The performers will include **Ville Rusanen**, **Jan Lehtola**, **Markku Hietaharju** and the **Turku Cathedral Oratorio Choir**.

Also scheduled for later this year are numerous performances. The suite from the opera *Isfåglarna* (Halcyons) will be heard at Konnevesi in July. In November, there will be organ and vocal music by Kortekangas in a concert in Kuopio, and **Kari Vuola** will premiere new choral preludes in Pori. In December, the *Clarinet Concerto* by Kortekangas is in the concert program of the Oulu Sinfonia.

New chamber work by Samuelsson

Marie Samuelsson's *Movements of Seashells and Plastic* for clarinet, violin, percussion and piano was composed during her residence with the Polish contemporary ensemble Kwartludium. The piece consists of concrete sounds from nature that have been given musical form through sonorous combinations and transformations with acoustic instruments. "The sound of plastic is a sad new feature in the oceans", says Samuelsson. The ensemble premiered the work at the Svensk Musikvår festival in Stockholm in March. It was subsequently performed at the Beijing Modern Music Festival in China on 17 May and will be presented again in October at the Arena Festival in Riga, Latvia.



Marie Samuelsson

Photo: Mats Bäckér

Minna Leinonen & Moomins

Minna Leinonen has composed orchestral music for the Moomin story by Tove Jansson. Guess what happens next? (Kuinkas sitten kävikään?) is a concert inspired by The Book About Moomin, Mymble and Little My. The audience at this family concert is immersed in the story by the music, narrator and pictures projected onto the back of the stage. The work was premiered by the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra in March 2025, and it is also in the pipeline for Pori and Kuopio. The concerts are part of the Moomin 80 anniversary and will be held in collaboration with the Moomin Museum and Moomin Characters. This dramatized musical fairytale will take the audience on an exciting adventure suitable for ages 5 upwards.



Photo: Samuli Viitanen

Martinsson's Soundscape on CD

Rolf Martinsson's horn concerto *Soundscape – A Walk in Colours* has now been released on CD by Berlin Classics on the album "Northern Colours". The concerto is dedicated to the phenomenal hornist Felix Klieser, here playing together with the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie. The work was commissioned jointly by Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi and the Norrlandsoperan Symphony Orchestra. The new album was chosen "The Best Classic Album of the Month" by Sweden's biggest daily newspaper, Dagens Nyheter, in April. (Read more under reviews).



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Harri Viitanen in memoriam

Harri Viitanen died on 19 May at the age of 70. For many years organist of Helsinki Cathedral, he was also an active composer and taught at the Sibelius Academy. His music, rich in ideas, was inspired in particular by astronomy and birds, and over the years, he composed a wide range of music primarily for the organ but also for ensembles. Among his best-known works are the Organ Concerto *Firmamentum*, and *Images d'oiseau* for organ based on the analysis of birdcalls.

Viitanen's warm, bright nature will long be remembered. His music lives on: *Sound of the Senate Square* can be heard every day in Helsinki at 17:49. A lifelike audio work, it combines the frequencies of the church bells, the sound of a grand piano and organ, and the tinkling of a glass bird.

Jörgen Dafgård news

In early May Jörgen Dafgård spent a week together with Orquesta Filarmónica de Bogotá in Columbia to record a portrait album with five of his orchestral works: *Veils*, *Through Fire and Water*, *Mosaïque vibrante*, *Abrasax – Concerto for soprano saxophone* and *Tableau vivant* for violin and orchestra. The recording featured Anders Paulsson, soprano saxophone, and Luis Martín Niño, violin, under the direction of conductor Joachim Gustafsson. It will be released on Footprint Records. Dafgård has just finished composing a cello concerto for Amalie Stalheim, due to be premiered by the Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra on 15 January 2026.



Jörgen Dafgård



Photo: Mike Barmia

Jörgen Dafgård