



Photo: Mikko Karsisto

Unbelievably dramatic soundfest

It is surely not very common to go home from an opera composed in the latter half of the 20th century humming a catchy melody? It was a flash of genius on Kokkonen's part to construct an opera based on old chorale themes around a nuclear motif constantly shifting à la Sibelius and building up to an unbelievably dramatic soundfest in the finale. ...Some of the most dramatic moments are expressed in dense, fierce orchestration, those of calm and happiness in a major-key-like sunny, triad-oriented milieu. The music is a thrilling mix of new and traditional, fresh and familiar. In other words, a classic. *Aamulehti* 6.3.

Joonas Kokkonen: Viimeiset kiusaukset (The Last Temptations) 🎬

Tampere Opera/Ville Matveje, , dir. Mikko Kouki, sol. Mika Kares, Silja Aalto etc, 5.-15.3.2025
Tampere, Finland



Magnificent Staern album

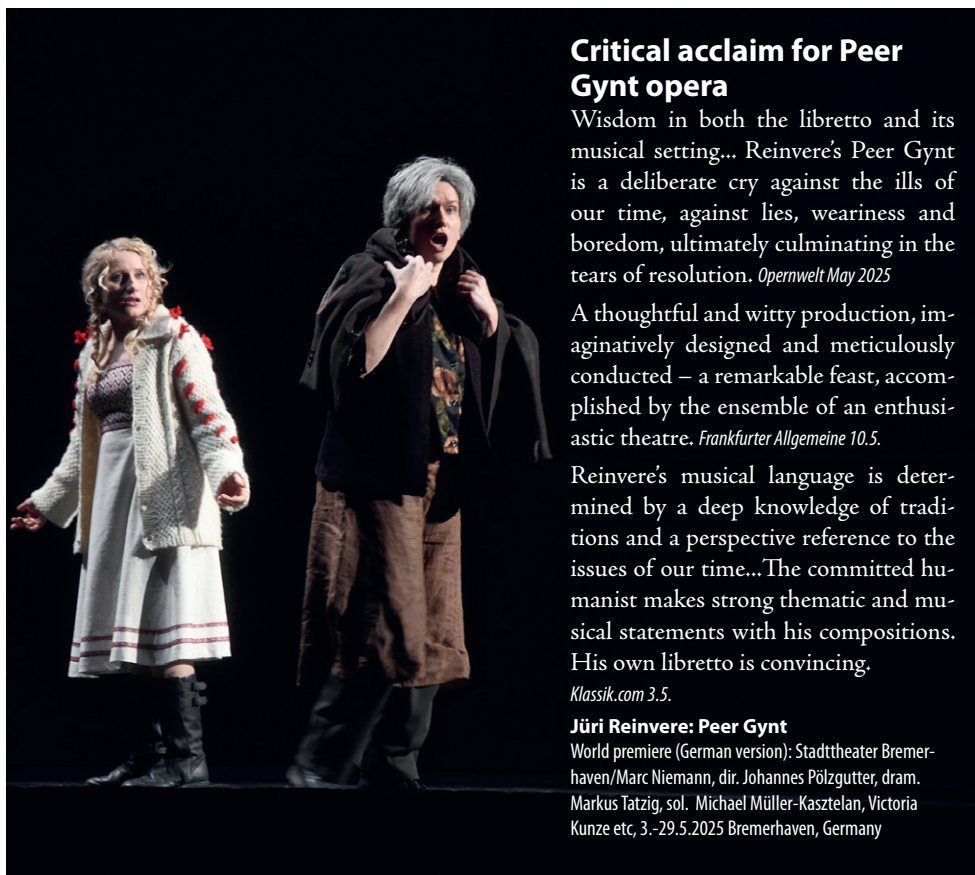
A magnificent portrait album with rumblings of war, extreme weather and a clarinet concerto.

Dagens Nyheter 18.4.

Such wealth of invention!... Karin Dornbusch is a brilliant soloist... The music grows the whole time the more you listen to it... A fantastic album and the Gävle Symphony Orchestra and conductor Emil Eliasson do an incredibly fine job. *Musikrevyn/Swedish Radio P2* 28.4.

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

CD: Gävle SO/Emil Eliasson, sol. Karin Dornbusch, cl. (Swedish Society SCD 1190, 'Worried Souls')



Critical acclaim for Peer Gynt opera

Wisdom in both the libretto and its musical setting... Reinvere's Peer Gynt is a deliberate cry against the ills of our time, against lies, weariness and boredom, ultimately culminating in the tears of resolution. *Opernwelt* May 2025

A thoughtful and witty production, imaginatively designed and meticulously conducted – a remarkable feast, accomplished by the ensemble of an enthusiastic theatre. *Frankfurter Allgemeine* 10.5.

Reinvere's musical language is determined by a deep knowledge of traditions and a perspective reference to the issues of our time...The committed humanist makes strong thematic and musical statements with his compositions. His own libretto is convincing.

Klassik.com 3.5.

Jüri Reinvere: Peer Gynt

World premiere (German version): Stadttheater Bremerhaven/Marc Niemann, dir. Johannes Pölgutter, dram. Markus Tatzig, sol. Michael Müller-Kasztelan, Victoria Kunze etc, 3.-29.5.2025 Bremerhaven, Germany

Impressive music by Freeman

Alex Freeman's Northern April to words by Edna St. Vincent Millays possessed an outstanding potency as the voices soared into the spheres and the flow grew increasingly dynamic.

Hufvudstadsbladet 5.3.

Alex Freeman: Northern April for mixed choir 🎧

Somnium Ensemble/Elisa Huovinen, 6.3. 2025 Helsinki, Finland

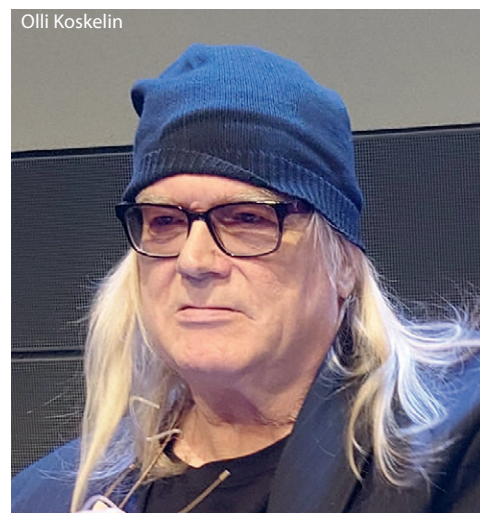


Photo: Henna Salmea

Koskelin symphony a bullseye

The Yle-commissioned symphony by Olli Koskelin was a veritable bullseye. The First symphony in 11 movements now premiered reflects a flowing world in which, says Koskelin, shoals of fish and other watery inhabitants occupy the leading roles. What a pleasure it is to hear a composer who knows how to write weighty symphonic music for orchestra. *Helsingin Sanomat* 13.2.

Olli Koskelin: First Symphony in 11 movements

World premiere: Finnish RSO/Nathana "I Iselin, 12.2.2025 Helsinki, Finland (Musica nova)



Photo: rinnamurta.fi

Masterly orchestration

Kalevi Aho's Violin Concerto No. 2 is one of the best of its kind in Finland... traditional in the positive sense... The violin of the soloist, Tami Pohjola, shone with a clear, glossy glow and with fiery bravura in the finale. *Helsingin Sanomat* 7.4.

Kalevi Aho: Violin Concerto No. 2


Lahti SO/Osmo Vänskä, sol. Tami Pohjola, 4.4.2025 Lahti, Finland

Larsson Gothe's dreamy Cello Concerto

It is a composition that frees itself from format norms such as excellence and feats of strength and rather becomes a psychological portrait with poetic intensity. Thedéen is impressive in tone and presence, and the solo part's interpretation feels, more than anything else, deeply personal.

Svenska Dagbladet 11.4.

It was the cello concerto that triggered my imagination. Mats Larsson Gothe has created 20 dreamy minutes for and with Torleif Thedéen's cello. It plays a high, shimmering A and lights up the orchestra to an enchanted glitter... It alternates between dreamlike sweetness and furious aggression that at last finds its high A again – but ends in the middle of a gesture, in the middle of a sentence ... *Dagens Nyheter 11.4.*

Mats Larsson Gothe: Cello Concerto 

World premiere: Royal Stockholm PO/Johannes Gustavsson, soloist Torleif Thedéen, 10.5.2025 Stockholm, Sweden

Torleif Thedéen



Photo: Nadja Sjöröm

Dramatic and beautiful Chaplin Songs

Nelson has created an evocative and dramatic work, in which a recurrent, swaying rhythm, accentuated with tubular bells and basses, reinforces the seriousness of the text with uncompromising power. It is beautiful, grandiose and full of attractive sonorities and melodies... Choral sections contrast with solo sections, where Camilla Tilling's rich and expressive voice blazes like an undying flame in the darkness. *Gef e Dagblad 12.4.*

Daniel Nelson: Chaplin Songs

Gävle SO/Christian Rei, 11.4.2025 Gävle, Sweden

Imaginative Karin Rehnqvist

Rehnqvist's Take the Milky Way received the most enthusiastic response from the large audience. It was also the most imaginative piece of the evening. The Swedish poet Kerstin Perski's fragmentary linguistic imagery leaves much room for the music. The melodies floated weightlessly, sometimes even anxiously, in the midst of empty space—echoes of the cosmos.

Helsingin Sanomat 28.4.

Take the Milky Way gave the impression of a highly developed sensitivity to the choral idiom and its possibilities, and the delicious organ effects fit nicely within the context.

Hufvudstadsbladet 28.4.

Karin Rehnqvist: Take the Milky Way

World premiere: Helsinki Chamber Choir, Finnish Baroque Orchestra/Nils Schreckendiek, 26.4.2025 Helsinki, Finland

Fascinating midnight tales

Violinist Ilya Gringolts crowned the season with fascinating midnight tales. The first movement floats at the thresholds of consciousness, where the violin's delicate melody is joined by shimmering tones that seem to arise directly from the air... The second is driven forward by a colorful dotted rhythm, with a melody that shifts between romanticism, oriental hints, and dangerous heat... The third movement's encounter between violin, gong, and vibraphone conjures visions of strange creatures moving with enigmatic majesty... The final movement's impulse to flee is propelled by pounding pulses and brass players who catch the melody mid-flight and lift it like a sail.

Gef e Dagblad 23.5.

Albert Schnelzer: Violin Concerto No. 2 – Nocturnal Songs

Gävle SO/Christian Rei, sol. Ilya Gringolts, 23.5.2025 Gävle, Sweden



Reiff, Schnelzer & Gringolts

Photo: Gävle Symphony Orchestra

June–September

PASI LYYTIKÄINEN

Tässä on lohtu

Värinä Chamber Choir/Noora Hirn

4.6. Helsinki, Finland

AULIS SALLINEN

Shaka – Melodrama for reciter and ensemble

Festival ensemble/Jan Söderblom, recit. Matti Leino

5.6. Naantali, Finland (Naantali Music Festival)

PER GUNNAR PETERSSON

Grant Us Peace

Female Voices of the Lund University Choir/Cecilia Martin-Löf

7.6. Marktoberdorf, Germany (International Choral Competition)

JOHAN ULLÉN

One Last Tango (Apocalypse)

BBC Concert Orchestra/Anna-Maria Helsing

12.6. London, UK

KALEVI AHO

String Quartet No. 5

Kamus Quartet

12.6. Helsinki, Finland (Lauttasaari Music Festival)

BENJAMIN STAERN

Two Grumpy Old Men

Håkan Hardenberger, tpt, Stefan Dohr, hn

18.6. Sandefjord, Norway (Fjord Classics Festival)

LARA POE

Petite suite d'après Couperin(s)

Finnish Baroque Orchestra

13.7. Kemiönsaari, Finland (Kimito Island Music Festival)

OLLI KORTEKANGAS

Alkyone (Suite from the opera Halcyons)

Helsinki CO/Henriikka Teerikangas, sol. Minna-Leena Lahti

20.7. Konnevesi, Finland

ALBERT SCHNELZER

Tales of Darkness and Sorrow

Helsingborg SO/Magnus Larsson

20.8. Helsingborg, Sweden (Helsingborg International Piano Festival)

DANIEL BÖRTZ

Concerto Grosso

Change Music Ensemble/Simon Crawford Phillips

22.8. Kungsbacka, Sweden (Change Music Festival)

The Rave Chronicles

In the Rave Chronicles the sound-picture is transformed into an anguished machinery that keeps ticking mercilessly. It is fateful; descending scales, metallic clicking, tempi that seem to be in a hurry to overlap one another... the work itself will remain etched in one's memory.

Västerbottenskuriren 27.4.

Daniel Nelson: The Rave Chronicles

World premiere: Norrlandsoperan SO/Patrik Ringborg, sol. Yamaha Disklavier,

25.4.2025 Umeå, Sweden

Martinsson's elegant and colourful Soundscape

His craft of composition is a God-given talent... cinematic... brilliantly orchestrated. This is some of the most gripping music by Martinsson that I have heard. *Musikrevyn/Swedish Radio P2 18.5*

Rolf Martinsson: Soundscape – A Walk in Colours 

CD: Deutsche Radio Philharmonie/Jamie Phillips, sol. Felix Klierer, hn (Berlin Classics 0303248BC, 'Northern Colours')