

SCHUMANN

Konzertstück for Four Horns and Orchestra
Adagio and Allegro

SAINT-SAËNS

Morceau de concert

GLIÈRE

Horn Concerto

Markus Maskuniitty

Royal Stockholm
Philharmonic Orchestra

Sakari Oramo





Monica Berenguer Caro, Kristofer Öberg, Martin Schöpfer and Markus Maskuniitty

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810–1856)

Konzertstück für 4 Hörner und Orchester, Op. 86

17:20

- | | | |
|---|-------------------|------|
| 1 | I. Lebhaft – | 7:13 |
| 2 | II. Romanze – | 4:21 |
| 3 | III. Sehr lebhaft | 5:46 |

Adagio and Allegro, Op. 70 (orch. by Ernest Ansermet)

7:40

- | | | |
|---|-------------|------|
| 4 | I. Adagio | 3:17 |
| 5 | II. Allegro | 4:22 |

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS (1835–1921)

Morceau de concert, Op. 94

9:01

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|------|
| 6 | I. Allegro moderato – | 3:53 |
| 7 | II. Adagio – | 3:17 |
| 8 | III. Allegro non troppo | 1:51 |

REINHOLD GLIÈRE (1875–1956)

Horn Concerto, Op. 91

23:46

- | | | |
|----|---------------|-------|
| 9 | I. Allegro | 10:52 |
| 10 | II. Andante | 6:19 |
| 11 | III. Moderato | 6:32 |

MARKUS MASKUNIIITY, horn

2nd hornist: Martin Schöpfer (1–3)

3rd hornist: Kristofer Öberg (1–3)

4th hornist: Monica Berenguer Caro (1–3)

ROYAL STOCKHOLM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

SAKARI ORAMO, conductor

The horn is an instrument whose history can be traced back to the origins of human civilisation. It became established in art music at the Court of Versailles in the 17th century; hence the modern instrument is referred to as the 'French horn'. The development of the horn from natural horns to valve horns was a major step in the evolution of the instrument. Horn players were now able to play all notes of the chromatic scale, and composers were able to write virtuoso works for concert performance. This recording showcases four such *concertante* works, covering a period of one hundred years from 1849 to 1951.

Robert Schumann (1810–1856) used the horn in a number of works, and there is no doubt that he had a profound affinity with the instrument. He went so far as to claim that the horn was the "soul of the orchestra". In his symphonies, horns play an important role: one need only think of the solemn horn passages in his Third Symphony, *Rhenisch* (1850).

The most substantial of Schumann's works featuring the horn is the *Konzertstück* for four horns and orchestra Op. 86. Schumann described the work in a letter to his publisher as "quite a curiosity". Indeed, this work written at the very height of his creative powers was a pioneering achievement in music, since it was one of first to exploit the capabilities of the valve horn, which had been patented in 1818. Schumann created a true virtuoso piece for four soloists that because of its technical demands was considered unplayable and after its premiere not performed in concert until many years later.

Schumann completed the first draft of the work by 20 February 1849, just before the violent May uprising in Dresden. He wrote to his friend Ferdinand Hiller in April 1849 that it was through his creative work that he was able to maintain an inner balance despite the turbulent events that were unfolding in the streets. He also added that he considered the *Konzertstück* one of his best achievements as a composer. The work was rehearsed with members of the Dresden Hofkapelle before its premiere under Julius Rietz at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig on 25 February 1850. The work was favourably received by the public and was soon published, in the following year. The *Konzertstück* is in three movements, following the traditional concerto format but played without a break. The



Robert Schumann

heroic first movement is followed by a beautiful reflective slow movement – an elegiac Romance – segueing into the final movement that brings the work to a majestic close.

During 1849, Schumann wrote three works featuring the valve horn. The *Adagio and Allegro* for horn and piano Op. 70 may be considered a precursor to the *Konzertstück*. The composing process only took a few days, from 14 to 17 February 1849, and on the very next day after completing the *Adagio and Allegro*, Schumann began writing the *Konzertstück*. Originally titled 'Romance and Allegro', the *Adagio and Allegro* has been arranged for various instruments and is well known in an arrangement for cello and piano. In the early 1940s, an orchestration was finally provided by Swiss conductor Ernest Ansermet (1883–1969). This orchestration was also recorded for Decca in 1959, with Edmund Leloir as soloist.

Clara Schumann described the *Adagio and Allegro* as a “magnificent piece, fresh and passionate, and exactly what I like” after hearing Julius Schlitterlau, principal horn with the Dresden Orchestra, rehearsing the work together with the composer. Schumann's piece is a central work in the Romantic horn repertoire and a prime example of his chamber music.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921) developed from a child prodigy into one of the most influential characters on the French music scene in the 19th century. Alongside his versatile careers as an educator, an organist and a pianist, he wrote music in virtually all forms and genres of art music, including 13 operas, five symphonies (three of them numbered) and a total of 24 concertante works.

The *Morceau de concert* for horn and orchestra op. 94 dates back to 1887, by which time Saint-Saëns had attained international success as a composer, just prior to the serious deterioration of his health in 1889–1890. Originally titled *Fantaisie*, it is one of three works that Saint-Saëns wrote for the horn. The *Morceau* is dedicated to a famous horn builder, Henri Chaussier, who also developed a type of horn of his own, the Cor Chaussier. This sophisticated and masterfully crafted three-movement piece – with a slow lyrical Andante



Camille Saint-Saëns

as its middle movement – highlights Saint-Saëns's mature skills in orchestral writing and as a composer of solo instrumental music.

Reinhold Glière (1875–1956) wrote a number of symphonic poems and three outstanding symphonies (e.g. No. 3, *Ilya Muromets*) prior to the October Revolution in 1917. The Revolution had a profound effect on Glière's career: unlike many of his colleagues, Glière chose to remain in the country. In the following years he worked as an educator and wrote a variety of musical works including the first Soviet ballet (*The Red Poppy*). He also received several State awards.

Besides creating works for the stage, in his late years Glière also focused on writing instrumental concertos, including the Horn Concerto in B flat major Op. 91 – probably the best known of his concertos. This work remained the last orchestral work that he himself completed (his Violin Concerto was left unfinished in 1956 and later edited by Boris Lyatoshinsky). When Glière wrote his Horn Concerto in 1951, he was already 76 years old. The concerto was written for Valery Polekh (1918–2006), a long-time member of the Bolshoi orchestra, who also played the solo part at the premiere of the work. Glière had composed two pieces for the horn back in 1908 (Op. 35), but it was Polekh who pointed out to him that no major concerto had yet been written for the instrument by a Russian composer. According to Polekh, the composer used Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto as a model when writing the work. The cadenza written by Polekh is often used in performances of this concerto, but this recording features a new one written by Markus Maskuniitty.

Glière's Horn Concerto is a full-scale concerto in a very traditional and Romantic idiom, with echoes of Tchaikovsky and other great masters of Russian classical music. It was with this melodically rich work influenced by folk music that the last surviving member of the 19th-century Russian school of composers finished his career and brought an end to an entire era in the history of classical music.

Joel Valkila

Reinhold Glière





The Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra

Markus Maskuniitty began his music studies in the Rauma Youth Band at the age of 9 and went on to study with Timo Ronkainen at the Helsinki Conservatory and the Sibelius Academy. His other influential teachers were Olavi Vikman, Antero Kasper and Radovan Vlatkovic.

Maskuniitty was a prizewinner at the Nordic Horn competition in 1989, at the Markneukirchen International Instrumental Competition in 1991 and at the ARD Competition in Germany in 1994, and he was named Brass Player of the Year in Finland in 1992. He has created an extensive career as a horn soloist in the capital cities of three European countries.

Maskuniitty joined the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester as Principal Horn in 1990. On tour with the orchestra, Claudio Abbado was impressed by Maskuniitty's playing and invited him to audition for the Berlin Philharmonic. He played Principal Horn with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra from 1991 to 1993 and then joined the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin as Principal Horn. Eventually, in 1997, he joined the Berlin Philharmonic as Principal Horn. In 1999, he left this position to return to the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester, where he remained until 2007. In 2000, he also played with the Bayreuth Festival Orchestra. Maskuniitty joined the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra as Principal Horn in 2007. He has also been a member of the Stockholm Chamber Brass (2000–2010) and the Berlin Philharmonic Octet.

Maskuniitty has premiered horn concertos by Jukka Linkola, Harri Wessman and Jorge Torres Sáenz and a double horn concerto by Andrea Tarrodi. He was appointed Professor of Horn at the Hannover Musikhochschule in 2000.

The present album is Markus Maskuniitty's solo debut recording. His previous recordings include chamber music with the Stockholm Chamber Brass (BIS), as well as the premiere recording of Penderecki's Sextet (Naxos). In addition, Maskuniitty's solo horn playing may be heard on several recordings made by the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester, the Berlin Philharmonic and the Royal Stockholm

Philharmonic Orchestra, including the 1998 live recording of Bruckner's Fourth Symphony with the Berlin Philharmonic under Günter Wand.

Markus Maskuniitty and Sakari Oramo began their collaboration in the early 1990s when both played with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Avanti! Chamber Orchestra. The collaboration continued when Oramo was appointed Chief Conductor of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra. Under Sakari Oramo, Maskuniitty has performed as a concert soloist in Schumann's *Konzertstück* and Britten's *Serenade* Op. 31.

The Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra was founded in 1902 and Konserthuset Stockholm has been its home since 1926. Regular guest conductors include notable names such as Riccardo Muti, Herbert Blomstedt, Karina Canellakis, Manfred Honeck, Christoph Eschenbach and Conductor Laureate Alan Gilbert.

Finnish Sakari Oramo is Chief Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the orchestra since 2008. His current contract runs until 2021. Sakari Oramo has carried out several successful tours with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra. The German newspaper Die Welt concluded recently that Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra is "one of the world's best orchestras".

The orchestra has also received considerable attention for several recordings with Sakari Oramo, among them the Carl Nielsen symphonies were critically acclaimed internationally and the recordings of Symphonies Nos. 1 and 3 received a BBC Music Magazine Award 2016. The CD Distant Light, recorded together with world-renowned soprano Renée Fleming, was released in 2017.

Recently, the acclaimed conductor Franz Welser-Möst was awarded the new title Eric Ericson Honorary Chair from the orchestra. He joins the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra for two weeks each season from 2020/21.

The orchestra participates annually in the Nobel Prize Award Ceremony and the Nobel Prize Concert.

www.konserthuset.se





Winner of the 2015 Royal Philharmonic Society Conductor of the Year award, **Sakari Oramo** is Chief Conductor of both the BBC Symphony and the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic orchestras, and Principal Conductor of the Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra. Between 1998 and 2008 he was Music Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and between 2004 and 2018 he was Principal Conductor of the West Coast Kookola Opera. After a decade as Chief Conductor of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, he has now served as their Honorary Conductor since 2012.

Highlights of the 2018/19 season include returns to the Berliner Philharmoniker — conducting the world premiere of Brett Dean's new Cello Concerto performed by Alban Gerhardt — NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester, Staatskapelle Dresden, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. He will continue to champion the promotion of new and rarely performed works with the BBC Symphony Orchestra — this season he conducts the premieres of Thomas Larcher's Chiasma and Richard Causton's Ik Zeg Nu, and will also lead a day featuring the works of György Ligeti — and will conduct numerous concerts with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra with soloists Kirill Gerstein, Alina Pogostkina, Frank Peter Zimmermann and Nina Stemme.

Recent highlights have included concerts with the Czech Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic and Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin. During the summer of 2018, he conducted several Proms with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, including the First Night of the Proms, and the BBC Singers. He has also previously conducted the Last Night of the Proms (in 2014, 2016 and 2017).

Sakari Oramo





Markus Maskuniitty & Producer Ingo Petry

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Instrumentarium:

Markus Maskuniitty: Alexander 103, mouthpiece: JK 1CM

Martin Schöpfer: Alexander 103, nouthpiece: JK 1CM

Kristofer Öberg: Alexander 103, mouthpiece: Tilz McWilliam 1

Monica Berenguer Caro: Alexander 103, mouthpiece: Schmidt 11





ODE 1339-2

MARKUS MASKUNIITTY

'Horn ... is the soul of the orchestra' (Robert Schumann)

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

1-3 **Konzertstück für 4 Hörner und Orchester, Op. 86** 17:20

4-5 **Adagio and Allegro, Op. 70** (orch. by Ernest Ansermet) 7:40

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6-8 **Morceau de concert, Op. 94** 9:01

REINHOLD GLIÈRE (1875-1956)

9-11 **Horn Concerto, Op. 91** 23:46

MARKUS MASKUNIITTY, horn

Martin Schöpfer | Kristofer Öberg | Monica Berenguer Caro, horns (1-3)

ROYAL STOCKHOLM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

SAKARI ORAMO, conductor



[59:08] • English notes enclosed

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