

London **Philharmonic** Orchestra

SIBELIUS
SYMPHONY NO. 5
POHJOLA'S DAUGHTER

LUTOSŁAWSKI
CONCERTO FOR ORCHESTRA

JUKKA-PEKKA SARASTE *conductor*
LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA



SIBELIUS POHJOLA'S DAUGHTER

Amongst the European musical menagerie at the dusk of the 19th century, there could be heard a lone wolf howling in a faraway forest: it was the voice of Jean Sibelius. Not only was the composer's orchestral language unique, it also evoked the physical and spiritual essence of its creator's country like no other; indeed, in that respect Sibelius arguably remains unsurpassed. But instead of viewing the composer as the eccentric elk of the compositional community, Europe and America welcomed Sibelius into their concert halls with open arms. In the 1930s the New York Philharmonic's audience voted him their favourite living composer.

Sibelius and Finland are inseparable, despite the composer's genetic make-up being predominantly Swedish. His famous orchestral hymn *Finland Awakes* (known as *Finlandia*) fanned the flames of Finnish independence and the rest of his catalogue is littered with works referencing characters from the country's storytelling tradition. *Pohjola's Daughter* of 1906 is one such example. The title refers to the 'daughter of the place of Pohjo', or as she is better known in the Finnish national epic the *Kalevala*, the 'maiden of the north country' who is unsuccessfully pursued by the bearded wizard Väinämöinen.

Sibelius does not provide a programmatic description of that narrative in *Pohjola's Daughter*, but he does hint at certain happenings: Väinämöinen's haughty brass arrival and the maiden's cackling woodwind laughter, for example. The overall aim was more to capture the spirit of the story and of the *Kalevala* itself, which Sibelius achieves partly by borrowing musical themes from the unique song tradition with which the stories were often recounted. The composer also develops orchestral techniques he had explored in the first two symphonies: the sustained 'pedal-note' in the bass, the 'stepping' sequencing in the violins, and the emergence of an imposing tune with its basis in a previous musical idea. All three would be developed further in the Fifth Symphony.

Andrew Mellor

SIBELIUS

SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN E FLAT MAJOR

In the early 1910s Sibelius could add to his own financial and health problems those of Finland itself. Russia was strengthening its grip on the province, suspending parliament and attempting to drive out the Finnish language. As Europe slipped towards war, Finland, aligned with Russia, faced mass slaughter and the annihilation of its timber-exporting industry. 'In a deep mire again, but already I begin to see dimly the mountain that I shall ascend', wrote a knowing Sibelius, 'God opens His door for a moment and His orchestra plays the Fifth Symphony.'

The work was rapidly forming in his mind; themes included the onset of spring and the spirit of the composer's country home at Järvenpää. Then, on 12 April 1914, Sibelius witnessed a sight that would affect him profoundly and write the Fifth Symphony's main theme for him. It was a flock of sixteen swans, soaring upwards from the Järvenpää lake for their migration. 'One of my greatest experiences', Sibelius wrote in his diary, 'the Fifth Symphony's final theme – legato in the trumpets'.

At the time of the Symphony's Helsinki première on 8 December 1915 there were four movements, Sibelius later telescoping his first movement and scherzo into the opener we

now know. After the initial theme on glowing horns and woodwinds, the music gains momentum and folds outwards, the orchestra falling over itself in contrary motion towards the proclamation of a major fourth interval by the trumpet. The opening motif soon appears again, returning in another form as the symphony is injected with optimism by an upward-pining theme – again in the trumpets.

Those gestures sow the seeds for Sibelius's finale, in which the double basses are soon heard spelling out a fifth that augments as the bottom note drops twice, stepping back up in the manner of an ostinato. Here are the Järvenpää swans. As it is taken up by the horns, the theme gains the pace and grandeur of flight, like the graceful rise and fall of a wing. Then the music suddenly shifts key: Sibelius's pedal-note disappears like the falling away of a runway, and the swans – magically, gloriously – take flight. After intricate passages in the woodwinds the swans can be heard in the distance, returning as if for a last salute. Again they soar inspiringly upwards, cutting through a tangling orchestral texture as if to break free from their creator's earthly concerns. Six resigned orchestral jabs bid them a final farewell.

Andrew Mellor

LUTOSŁAWSKI

CONCERTO FOR ORCHESTRA

During the late 1940s and early '50s, while he was out of favour with Poland's Stalinist cultural administration because of his alleged 'modernism', Witold Lutosławski concentrated on writing practical pieces combining simple folk tunes with more complex accompaniments. The Concerto for Orchestra, written between 1950 and 1954, was a large-scale essay in similar methods, based on folk melodies from Masovia, the region around Warsaw. Its success brought Lutosławski back into official favour, and it has proved to be his most popular orchestral composition. Nevertheless, he considered it a 'marginal work' in his output, standing apart from his subsequent development of new techniques of harmony and texture. But it does anticipate his later works in its mastery of the large orchestra, living up to its title in its constant mixing of colours and in the brilliance demanded from every section.

The Concerto is also characteristic of Lutosławski in its overall shape, with two prefatory movements before a longer and more complex finale. The *Intrada*, or introduction, begins with a gradually unfolding melody over repeated F sharps in the bass; after a contrasting middle section of two alternating and expanding elements, the melody returns under ringing F sharps in the

high treble. The second movement is in effect a scherzo and trio: the scherzo is the scurrying *Capriccio notturno*, or 'nocturnal caprice', which is repeated in varied form before the strident, trumpet-led *Arioso*, and again after it before it dies away to nothing. The last movement begins with a *Passacaglia*, based in traditional fashion on a simple recurring theme, first heard in the double basses and harp. After this, the *Toccata* and *Chorale* are not separate episodes but are interwoven: the chorale melody is introduced, initially in the woodwind, as calm contrast to the bustling activity of the toccata; then, after a long developmental build-up, it returns to crown the movement, followed only by a short Presto coda.

Anthony Burton

Polska music



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ADAM MICKIEWICZ INSTITUTE is Poland's international cultural relations body. The Institute's activities are part of cultural diplomacy to promote Poland internationally.

POLSKA MUSIC PROJECT

The aim of the programme is to intensify the presentation and increase the popularity of Polish classical music in the world. Special focus is placed on contemporary music. The grant programme supports Polish music performances by outstanding foreign and Polish artists abroad and promotes music from Poland by recordings and phonographic publications.

JUKKA-PEKKA SARASTE *conductor*

Since 2010 Jukka-Pekka Saraste has been Chief Conductor of the WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne. He has also been Music Director of the Oslo Philharmonic since 2006. He was Music Director of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra (1987–2001), the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (1994–2001) and Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra (2002–2005). He founded the annual Tammisaari Festival for the Finnish Chamber Orchestra.

He has conducted the Philharmonia, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Chicago and Boston Symphony orchestras, the Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala, the Munich Philharmonic, the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France.

His discography includes the complete symphonies of Sibelius and Nielsen with the Finnish Radio Orchestra, as well as works by Bartók, Dutilleux, Mussorgsky and Prokofiev with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. His most recent recordings are Mahler Symphony No. 6 and DVD releases of Sibelius Symphonies Nos. 1 and 5 with the Oslo Philharmonic, as well as Mahler Symphony No. 9 with the WDR Symphony Orchestra.

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The London Philharmonic Orchestra is known as one of the world's great orchestras with a reputation secured by its performances in the concert hall and opera house, its many award-winning recordings, its trail-blazing international tours and its pioneering education work. Distinguished conductors who have held positions with the Orchestra since its foundation in 1932 by Sir Thomas Beecham include Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt, Franz Welser-Möst and Kurt Masur. Vladimir Jurowski was appointed the Orchestra's Principal Guest Conductor in March 2003 and became Principal Conductor in September 2007. The London Philharmonic Orchestra has been Resident Symphony Orchestra at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall since 1992 and there it presents its main series of concerts between September and

May each year. In summer, the Orchestra moves to Sussex where it has been Resident at Glyndebourne Festival Opera for over 40 years. The Orchestra also performs at venues around the UK and has made numerous tours to America, Europe and Japan, and visited India, Hong Kong, China, South Korea, Australia, South Africa and Abu Dhabi.

The London Philharmonic Orchestra made its first recordings on 10 October 1932, just three days after its first public performance. It has recorded and broadcast regularly ever since, and in 2005 established its own record label. These recordings are taken mainly from live concerts given by conductors including LPO Principal Conductors from Beecham and Boult, through Haitink, Solti and Tennstedt, to Masur and Jurowski. **www.lpo.org.uk**



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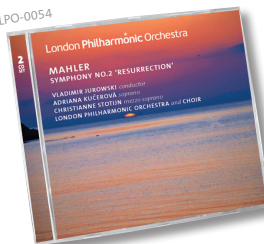
Khachaturian Violin Concerto & Piano Concerto

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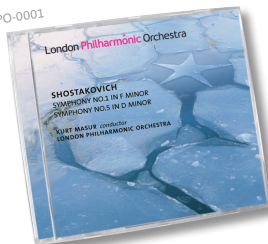
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Mahler Symphony No. 2

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Shostakovich Symphonies Nos. 1 & 5

JEAN SIBELIUS (1865–1957)

- 01 **12:14** Pohjola's Daughter, Op. 49
- 30:36** Symphony No. 5 in E flat major, Op. 82
- 02 12:59 Tempo molto moderato – Allegro moderato
- 03 8:30 Andante mosso, quasi allegretto
- 04 9:07 Allegro molto – Un pochettino largamente

WITOLD LUTOSŁAWSKI (1913–1994)

- 26:57** Concerto for Orchestra
- 05 6:37 Intrada: Allegro maestoso
- 06 5:42 Capriccio notturno e arioso: Vivace
- 07 14:38 Passacaglia, toccata e corale: Andante con moto – Allegro giusto

JUKKA-PEKKA SARASTE *conductor*
LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
Pieter Schoeman *leader (tracks 1–4)*
Duncan Riddell *guest leader (tracks 5–7)*

Recorded live at Southbank Centre's **ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL**, London