



# SIBELIUS

Kuolema • King Christian II

Overture in A minor

Two Songs from Twelfth Night

Pia Pajala, Soprano • Walteri Torikka, Baritone

Turku Philharmonic Orchestra

Leif Segerstam



## Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

### Kuolema • King Christian II

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) was the most significant figure in the formation of national identity in Finnish music, to the extent that since 2011 Finland has celebrated a Flag Day on 8th December (the composer's birthday), also known as the 'Day of Finnish Music'. The seven symphonies and *Violin Concerto* lie at the centre of Sibelius' oeuvre, surrounded by tone poems often concerning a Finnish folklore narrative, such as the famous epic, the *Kalevala* – the inspiration for his popular *Lemminkäinen Suite*. He was also prolific, however, in other genres, not least in songs for voice and piano (which number over a hundred), incidental music (for thirteen plays), chamber and choral works, and even an opera. Despite this significant body of work, after the composition of *Tapiola* in 1926, Sibelius produced no large-scale works for his remaining thirty-one years – a period often referred to as the 'Silence from Järvenpää'. Supporters say that this dearth was the result of over-stringent self-criticism, which shut down his creative faculties; critics blame a comfortable lifestyle supported by a state pension and refer to the composer's notorious consumption of alcohol, which he once described as "my truest friend". Sibelius did not stop composing altogether during this time, but focused on writing smaller-scale compositions and revising some of his earlier works, an example of which (*Kom nu hit, Död!*) features on this recording.

The *Overture in A minor*, JS144 was composed for a concert in March 1902, at which the *Second Symphony* received its première. Legend has it that the piece had been written in a hotel room during the course of a single night. Though the veracity of this is highly dubious, the music sounds hastily put-together, with little sense of relationship between the formality of the stern opening and conclusion and the lively comical middle section. Sibelius himself never valued it enough to authorise its publication, though he clearly did not consider the overture to be completely without merit, recycling material from it for the finale of his string quartet *Voces intimae* several years later. It remains one of the composer's least performed orchestral works.

Sibelius' output of incidental music for the theatre began in 1898 with *King Christian II* (Op. 27), a historical drama written by his friend, the Swedish dramatist Adolf Paul. Although the play was a great success at the time, it has now disappeared from the repertory, with only the music surviving the test of time. The narrative centres around the love of Christian II (whose rule extended over all three Scandinavian countries) for Dyveke, a Dutch girl from a humble background. The playful *Musette* movement, which stands out as the most distinctive of the pieces, was intended to be danced by this character in the play, accompanied by street musicians outside her window. Paul said that Sibelius had wanted bagpipes and reeds for this dance, but that he scored it for two clarinets and two bassoons, adding: "Extravagant, isn't it? We have only two bassoon players in the entire country, and one of them is consumptive." This is testament to the limited instrumental resources available to Sibelius at the time, and he himself conducted the small ensemble, situated behind the scenes.

The music originally consisted of only the first four movements, prefacing the action with a serene *Elegy* for strings, written very much in the spirit of Grieg and calling to mind such miniatures as *Heart's Wounds* and *The Last Spring*. However, Sibelius was later encouraged to add a further three pieces – *Nocturne*, *Serenade* and *Ballade* – which call for larger orchestration and are more ambitious in their layout. The expressive string writing in the *Nocturne* anticipates the *First Symphony* at times, while the *Serenade* 瑪 (whose main character begins at [1:47] after a short introductory minuet) gradually increases in passionate intensity – again, looking ahead to the composer's mature style – before dying away to a delicate conclusion. The suite was Sibelius' first orchestral work to appear in print, gaining him wide publicity throughout Europe, first in Leipzig (where it received hostile reviews from the German press), and then in London, when Henry Wood introduced British concert-goers to the work via the 1901 Proms season.

Although *King Christian II* may have been Sibelius' first orchestral work to enter the major European concert halls, his next foray into the realm of theatre music ensured he became a household name. His incidental music for *Kuolema* (Death), JS113 was composed in 1903 to accompany a play written by Arvid Järnefelt, his brother-in-law (the composer having married Aino Järnefelt in 1892). The play is rich in symbolism, echoing the dreamscapes of Strindberg's *A Dream Play* and Maeterlinck's *Pelléas et Mélisande* (for which Sibelius also composed incidental music two years later in 1905).

The music for *Kuolema* comprises six movements, the first of which, *Tempo di valse lente*, was intended for the play's opening scene. A woman, delirious and close to death, waltzes with an imaginary dancing partner, who transforms into the figure of death, at which point she collapses, and her son wakes from his sleep to find his mother's lifeless body. It is scored for string orchestra, with the addition of a bass drum in the fifth movement and 'campanelli di chiesa' (church bells) at the very end, evoking a suitably funereal mood.

Although *Kuolema* is not often performed in its entirety, several movements have enjoyed longevity and widespread popularity, such as the first. This is in no small part thanks to Sibelius' arrangement of it in 1904 as the *Valse triste*, which he sold for a one-off fee to a local music publisher Fazer. In hindsight this proved to be a grave error, since the piece, comprising one of his most haunting melodies, was then sold on to Breitkopf, who issued it in numerous arrangements, securing its popularity through performances by salon and hotel bands across Europe. Sibelius also conflated the third and fourth movements from *Kuolema* (*Elsa's Song* and a piece called *The Cranes*) under the title *Scene with Cranes* (1906), for which he added two clarinets to the

string texture. The intervals of fifths and sixths here are reminiscent of the main theme in the final movement of the *Fifth Symphony*, which Sibelius himself associated with a flight of swans, and the cries of swans, geese and cranes clearly had a special poignancy for him, as a diary entry from 1915 testifies: "Every day I have seen the cranes. Flying south in full cry with their music... Their cries echo throughout my being".

Despite the strong sense of nature and national identity heard in so much of his music, it is important to note that Sibelius spoke Swedish as well as Finnish, and many of the songs he wrote were settings of the former. The *Two Songs from Twelfth Night*, Op. 60 are a case in point, appearing not in Shakespeare's original English but in Carl August Hagberg's Swedish translation. Originally scored for baritone and either piano or guitar accompaniment, this pair of songs originally dates from 1909, a time when death was very much on the composer's mind, as he was then living in fear of the throat tumour that had developed the previous year. It is ironic that Sibelius should return to the first of these songs, *Kom nu hit, Död!* (Come Away, Death!) in 1957, the year of his death, making a transcription of the song's accompaniment for strings and harp (the version heard on this recording). The song alternates between E minor and a G sharp minor triad, creating an especially macabre colouring on the word 'död' ('death'). By contrast, *Hällilä uti storm och i regn* (Hey, Ho, The Wind And The Rain) adopts a lighter tone, making it a rather strange bedfellow, and not dissimilar to the sudden and rather incongruous shift in mood heard in the *Overture in A minor*. Such stylistic disparity did not bother Sibelius: for him, the serious and the comical evidently went hand-in-hand.

Dominic Wells

## Pia Pajala



Photo: Eija Hartemaa-Kallinen

A graduate of the opera programme at the Sibelius Academy, Finland, Pia Pajala is a versatile performer known for her wide vocal range, powerful expression and extensive repertoire. In recent years she has perfected her vocal technique with Finnish opera singer Kai Valtonen and Stockholm-based Dorothy Irving. Pia Pajala has appeared in many operatic rôles especially in contemporary works. She has also worked with some of Finland's most respected conductors, including Sakari Oramo, Leif Segerstam and Santtu-Matias Rouvali, having performed as a soloist with such orchestras as the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra and the Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra. She has also appeared with the Tallinn Baroque Orchestra and the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra. A renowned interpreter of Sibelius and Finnish classical music, she regularly performs with chamber ensembles. Further engagements include sacred works and appearances on concert stages at the Naantali and Turku Music Festivals, among others. She has also featured on radio broadcasts and recordings of the Finnish Broadcasting Company Yle.

## Waltteri Torikka



The baritone Waltteri Torikka is quickly establishing himself as one of the most promising new talents in the next generation of opera singers from Finland. He was named Young Musician of the Year 2014 by the Finnish Pro Musica Foundation and is the recipient of the 2013 Martti Talvela Foundation Award. He won the men's first prize in the Lappeenranta National Singing Competition in 2010 and was awarded the 2009 HSBC laureates' prize at the prestigious Mozart Academy of the Festival International d'Art Lyrique d'Aix-en-Provence. Torikka has sung with the Savonlinna Opera Festival, Finnish National Opera, Royal Danish Opera, Danish National Opera, New Generation Opera and at the Helsinki Festival. He has appeared with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Tapiola Sinfonietta, Turku Philharmonic Orchestra, Jyväskylä Sinfonia, Deutsche Radio Philharmonie and Camerata Salzburg, as well as working with conductors including Mikko Franck, Ville Matvejeff, Louis Langrée and Esa-Pekka Salonen.

## Turku Philharmonic Orchestra



Photo: Seilo Ristimäki

orchestra gives weekly concerts, often streamed live throughout the world, while its chamber music ensembles perform in the historical venues of Turku and the archipelago. The orchestra also organizes family concerts and performs in opera productions. The Turku Philharmonic is a pioneer in audience accessibility, providing access to concerts online in hospitals, residential care homes and schools.

## Leif Segerstam



Photo: Seilo Ristimäki

Leif Segerstam is a conductor, composer, violinist and pianist with a prominent international career. He received diplomas from the Sibelius Academy in violin and conducting, won the Maj Lind Piano Competition in 1962 and gave his first violin recital in 1963. He rounded off his studies at The Juilliard School in New York, where he was awarded a conducting diploma in 1964. Segerstam was Chief Conductor and Music Director of the Royal Opera in Stockholm from 1970-72 and Director of the Finnish National Opera in 1973-74. Since then he has conducted in most of the world's leading opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, Covent Garden and La Scala. He was Chief Conductor of the Austrian Radio Symphony Orchestra from 1975 to 1982 and of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra from 1977 to 1987, served as Music Director of the Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz from 1983 to 1989 and was appointed Chief Conductor of the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra in 1988. In autumn 1995 he was reappointed Chief Conductor of the Royal Opera in Stockholm (until 2001) and became Chief Conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. In autumn 2007 he stepped down to become the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra's Emeritus Chief Conductor. Since 2012 he has been Chief Conductor of Turku Philharmonic Orchestra. From autumn 1997 to spring 2013 Leif Segerstam was Professor of Orchestra Conducting at the Sibelius Academy. He was awarded the 1999 Nordic Council Music Prize for his work "as a tireless champion of Scandinavian music" and the Swedish Cultural Foundation's Prize for Music in 2003. In 2004 Leif Segerstam was awarded the annual Finnish State Prize for Music and in 2005 the highly esteemed Sibelius Medal. He has gained wide acclaim for his many recordings with different orchestras. While pursuing his conducting career, Segerstam has also produced an extensive oeuvre as a composer.

## Kuolema

*Texts: Arvid Järnefelt (1861-1932)*

### ③ Pakkanen puhurin poika

Pakkanen puhurin poika  
Talven poika hyyelmöinen  
jäädät maita jäädät soita,  
jäädät kylmiä kiviä,  
etpä jäädä ihmismieltä  
etpä ihmisen sydäntä!

Et kylmä inehmon mieltä  
jäädä et ihmisen syäntä  
syömmessä on hengen lämpö,  
tuli rinnassa ripeä,  
povessa palava poltto  
valkean vapauden kuume!

Minkä kylmät, virvoittavi  
sykkivän sydämmen lämpö,  
minkä jäädät, sulattavi  
lauluni lakean voima,  
poveni palava poltto,  
valkean vapauden kuume!

### ④ Eilaa, Eilaa

Eilaa, Eilaa...

## Death

*English translation: Andrew Barnett*

### ③ Paavali's Song

Jack Frost, son of the icy north wind,  
Icy son of winter,  
You freeze the land, you freeze the marshes,  
You freeze the cold stones,  
But you cannot freeze the human spirit,  
Nor the human heart!

You can chill neither people's spirits  
Nor their hearts,  
The warmth of one's spirit resides in the heart,  
The fire in one's breast is quick,  
The bosom houses a burning heat,  
The fever of pure freedom!

Whatever you freeze will be revived  
By the warmth of the beating heart,  
Whatever you freeze will be thawed out  
By the steadfast power of my song,  
My bosom houses a burning heat,  
The fever of pure freedom!

### ④ Elsa's Song

Eilaa, Eilaa...

## Trettondagsafton

### ⑧ Kom nu hit, Död!

*Swedish translation: Bertel Gripenberg (1878-1947)*

Kom nu hit, kom nu hit, Död!  
I krusflor förvara mig väl;  
hasta bort, hasta bort, nöd!  
Skön jungfrun har tagit min själ.  
Med svepning och buxbom på kistans lock,  
håll dig färdig;  
mång trogen har dött men ingen  
dock så värdig.

Ingen ros, ingen ros då  
mände strös på mitt svarta hus;  
Ingen vän, ingen vän  
må störa hvilan i jordens grus.  
Mig lägg för tusen suckars skull,  
åt en sida,  
Der ej älskande se min mull  
och qvida.  
Kom nu hit, kom nu hit, Död!

### ⑨ Hållilä, uti storm och i regn

*Finnish translation: Carl August Hagberg (1820-1865)*

Och när som jag var en liten smådräng,  
Hållilä, uti storm och i regn,  
Då var mig en bädd icke mer än en säng,  
Förty regnet det regnar var eviga dag.

Men när jag som karl börja' leva helt stort,  
Hållilä, uti storm och i regn,  
Då stängde envar för tjuven sin port,  
Förty regnet det regnar var eviga dag.

## Two Songs from Twelfth Night

### ⑧ Come Away, Death!

*Text: William Shakespeare (1564-1616)*

Come away, come away, Death!  
And in sad cypress let me be laid;  
Fly away, fly away, breath;  
I am slain by a cruel, fair maid.  
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,  
O prepare it!  
My part of death, no one so true,  
did share it.

Not a flow'r, not a flow'r sweet,  
on my black coffin let there be strown,  
not a friend, not a friend greet  
my poor corpse where my bones shall be thrown.  
A thousand, thousand sighs to save,  
lay me where  
sad true lovers never find my grave  
to weep there!  
Come away, come away, Death!

### ⑨ Hey, Ho, The Wind And The Rain

*Text: William Shakespeare (1564-1616)*

When that I was and a little tiny boy,  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
A foolish thing was but a toy,  
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came to man's estate,  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
'Gainst knaves and thieves men shut the gate,  
For the rain it raineth every day.

## Kung Kristian II

### 🕸 Sången om korsspindeln

*Text: Adolf Paul (1863-1943)*

Bak villande skog på en grönskande slätt,  
Där solskenet gassar så hett,  
Där sitter en spindel så svart och så stor,  
I gräset och stirrar och glör.  
Han solstrålar fångar och tvinnar och gnor,  
Och spinner till mörker och knyter ett flor,  
Så starkt och så tätt,  
Så luftigt och lätt,  
I dess maskor han fångar var levande själ,  
Och pinar och plågar ihjäl.

Och solen hon bleknar, och ljuset, så matt,  
Det slocknar i svartaste natt,  
Och människorna vandra omkring utan själ,  
Men finna sig fram lika väl.  
De tycka, att mörkret är ljust som en dag  
Och mörkrädda bli, när det ljusnar ett tag,  
Och gömma sig väl  
Och drömma sin själ  
Så stark och så fri; när de vakna från det,  
De tro, att de somna så sött.

Men spindeln han spinner så arg i sitt sinn,  
En själ kan han ej fånga in.  
Den själen går fri genom tidernas varv,  
Från hjälte till hjälte i arv,  
Och maktfulla gör dem och bringar dem nöd,  
Och ära och nesa och seger och död,  
Och pina och blod,  
För mandom och mod:  
Ty alla de strida mot spindelens nät,  
Och alla de falla på det.

## King Christian II

### 🕸 Fool's Song of The Spider

*English translation: Andrew Bentley*

In the green field behind a wild hedge,  
under the brooding heat of the sun,  
Crouches a spider so black and so fat,  
in the grass and fixes her gaze.  
Then sunlight catches her and she begins to  
thread and to twist and spin it until it is dark,  
and she weaves herself a web, so strong and so dense,  
so light and so airy,  
in which to catch and torment every soul  
until it lies dead in the threads.

The sun grows pale and twilight so soft  
gives way to the blackest night.  
And people wander about without souls,  
and unsuspectingly go their way.  
They think that the darkness is bright as day,  
and if it were to grow light they'd take fright.  
They take shelter and they dream  
that they are freer than they were before.  
And when they wake up,  
sweet slumber has beguiled them.

Though the spider weaves a web ne'er so fine,  
she cannot catch a soul in it.  
The souls soar free through the round of time;  
Flying from hero to hero,  
power brings the one, misery to the other,  
and honour and disgrace, and blessing and death,  
and torment and blood,  
to manhood and courage;  
All struggle against the spider's net.  
And all succumb at last to her lust.

Jean Sibelius was the most significant figure in the formation of Finland's musical identity. Beyond the famous symphonies and tone poems he was prolific in other genres, including music for the theatre. *King Christian II* and *Kuolema* ensured Sibelius's fame throughout Europe, the latter including the haunting melody (track 2) which would later become the *Valse triste*. The *Two Songs from Twelfth Night* contrast the spectre of death with more comical moods, an effect also to be heard in one of Sibelius's least performed orchestral works, the *Overture in A minor*.

## Jean SIBELIUS (1865-1957)

<b>1</b>	<b>Overture in A minor, JS144 (1902)</b>	<b>6:58</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Hållilå, uti storm och i regn (Hey, Ho, The Wind And The Rain) (orch. Kim Borg) (1909)**</b>	<b>1:41</b>
	<b>Kuolema – Complete Incidental Music, JS113 (1903)</b>	<b>24:14</b>		<b>Kung Kristian II (King Christian II) – Complete Incidental Music, Op. 27 (1898)</b>	<b>35:19</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>1. Tempo di valse lente – Poco risoluto</b>	<b>6:08</b>			
<b>3</b>	<b>2. Moderato (Paavali's Song: 'Pakkanen puhurin poika')</b>	<b>3:34</b>			
<b>4</b>	<b>3. Moderato assai – Moderato (Elsa's Song: 'Eilaa, eilaa') – Poco adagio</b>	<b>8:58</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Elegie</b>	<b>6:41</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>4. Andante (The Cranes)</b>	<b>1:14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Musette</b>	<b>2:13</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>5. Moderato</b>	<b>2:33</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Menuetto</b>	<b>1:59</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>6. Andante ma non tanto</b>	<b>1:47</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>Sången om korsspindeln (‘Fool's Song of The Spider’)</b>	<b>4:29</b>
	<b>Two Songs from Twelfth Night, Op. 60</b>	<b>4:44</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Nocturne</b>	<b>8:29</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Kom nu hit, Död! (Come Away, Death!) (1909, rev. 1957)**</b>	<b>3:03</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Serenade</b>	<b>5:09</b>
			<b>16</b>	<b>Ballade</b>	<b>6:19</b>

**Pia Pajala, Soprano\* • Waltteri Torikka, Baritone\*\***  
**Turku Philharmonic Orchestra • Leif Segerstam**

The sung texts and translations can be found inside the booklet,  
and can also be accessed at [www.naxos.com/libretti/573299.htm](http://www.naxos.com/libretti/573299.htm)  
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