

### **Legendary Sibelius conductor Neeme Järvi with the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra at the 2018 Sibelius Festival**

Järvi: 'The visit to the Sibelius Festival has a profound personal significance for me.'

The Lahti Symphony Orchestra is organizing the 19th International Sibelius Festival at the Sibelius Hall in Lahti on 6–9 September 2018. In 2018 the Republic of Estonia is celebrating the centenary of its foundation, and Sibelius himself had a personal connection to musical life in the Baltic states owing to the visits he made to conduct his own music in Estonia and Latvia in the early years of the twentieth century. In honour of Estonia's jubilee year, the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra has been invited to the festival together with its artistic director, the legendary Estonian Sibelius conductor Neeme Järvi. At their guest appearance on Friday 7 September 2018 the programme features Sibelius's Third and Fourth Symphonies and *Valse triste*. Dima Slobodeniouk, artistic director of the festival, will conduct the Lahti Symphony Orchestra in two concerts at which the soloist will be the Latvian violinist Baiba Skride, performing Sibelius's Violin Concerto and Six Humoresques. Among the other works to be performed by the Lahti Symphony Orchestra are the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies and the concert suite from the incidental music to *Swanwhite*. The festival's programme will include not only orchestral concerts but also chamber music and other Sibelius-themed activities. Ticket sales begin on Monday 8 January 2018 via Ticketmaster's outlets and website in Finland and from the Sibelius Hall.

Neeme Järvi: 'The visit to the Sibelius Festival has a profound personal significance for me.'

Conductor Neeme Järvi is very happy about the forthcoming visit. 'This visit celebrates both Finland's and Estonia's anniversary years', he says, and remarks that the visit has a profound personal significance for him: 'I have the honour of participating in the celebrations of these important events both in my homeland, Estonia, and in our close neighbour Finland, so it's possible to commemorate this historic time together.' Kristjan Hallik, general manager of the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, says that the visit to the Sibelius Festival in Lahti is also a great honour for the orchestra: 'We hope our performance will offer a new perspective on Sibelius's music, as maestro Järvi's music-making is unique'.

#### Chamber concerts with light and dancing as well as music

After the orchestral concert on 6 September, in the Sibelius Hall's main auditorium, there will also be a late evening chamber concert: the Wellamo Trio (Anu Silvasti, piano; Lotta Nykäsenoja, violin; Ilkka Uurtimo, cello) will perform Sibelius's Piano Trio in A minor, 'Hafträsk'.

At the chamber concert on Saturday 8 September at the Kalevi Aho Hall (Lahti Music Institute), the Meta4 quartet will play a programme including Sibelius's D minor string quartet 'Voces intimae' in conjunction with a light show. The members of Meta4 are violinists Antti Tikkanen and Minna Pensola, viola player Atte Kilpeläinen and cellist Tomas Djupsjöbacka.

The festival concludes with a 'Sibelius on a Sunday Morning' chamber concert on 9 September at the Sibelius Hall, a repeat by public demand of the corresponding concert at the 2017 festival. The dance work 'On a string', by the star dancer Minna Tervamäki and the choreographer and pioneer of modern flamenco Kaari Martin, is an interpretation of Sibelius's Violin Concerto. The work juxtaposes tradition and modernity, Finnishness and internationality, the sensitive and the demonic. The performers approach Sibelius via the musicality and sensitivity of flamenco and the expressive means of contemporary ballet. At the Sibelius Hall the work will be heard and seen in an interpretation by four equally strong performers: the two dancers are joined on stage by violinist Minna Pensola and pianist Heini Kärkkäinen.

#### Neeme Järvi and the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra

Neeme Järvi (b. 1937) is one of the world's most highly regarded conductors of today; he has made almost 500 recordings and has conducted many of the world's élite orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. From 1982 until 2004 he was principal conductor of the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, with which he made many Sibelius recordings for BIS Records, among them all seven symphonies.

Järvi's collaboration with the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra (est. 1926) began in 1956, and in 1963 (when it was known as the Estonian Radio Symphony Orchestra) he became its principal conductor, a position he retained until 1979. Järvi improved the orchestra's artistic standards significantly and also conducted its first international tours, to Romania and Bulgaria in 1972 and to Kuwait in 1976. Since then the orchestra has toured all over Europe and in the USA, and has appeared at numerous festivals including the Baltic Festival in Stockholm and Europamusical Festival in Munich.

#### **Thursday 6 September 2018**

##### **7pm, Sibelius Hall**

Lahti Symphony Orchestra  
Dima Slobodeniouk, conductor  
Baiba Skride, violin

Overture in A minor  
Violin Concerto  
Swanwhite, concert suite

*6pm Pre-concert talk*

#### **Approx. 9pm: Late Evening Chamber Concert**

Wellamo Trio:

Anu Silvesti, piano  
Lotta Nykäsenoja, violin  
Ilkka Uurtimo, cello

Piano Trio in A minor, 'Hafträsk'

#### **Friday 7 September 2018**

##### **7pm, Sibelius Hall**

Estonian National Symphony orchestra  
Neeme Järvi, conductor

Romance in C major for strings  
Valse triste and Scene with Cranes from 'Kuolema'  
Symphony No. 3  
Symphony No. 4

*6pm Pre-concert talk*

**Saturday 8 September 2018**  
**2pm, Kalevi Aho Hall**  
**Chamber Music Concert**

Meta4

Antti Tikkanen, violin  
Minna Pensola, violin  
Atte Kilpeläinen, viola  
Tomas Djupsjöbacka, cello

String Quartet in D minor, 'Voces Intimae'

**Saturday 8 September 2018**  
**5pm, Sibelius Hall**

Lahti Symphony Orchestra  
Dima Slobodeniouk, conductor  
Baiba Skride, violin

In memoriam  
Six Humoresques for violin and orchestra  
Symphony No. 6  
Symphony No. 7

*4pm Pre-concert talk*

**Sunday 9 September 2018**  
**11.30am, Sibelius Hall**  
**Sibelius on a Sunday Morning**

Minna Pensola, violin  
Heini Kärkkäinen, piano  
Kaari Martin and Minna Tervamäki, dance

Five Pieces ('The Trees') for piano  
'On a String': performance of Sibelius's Violin Concerto with dance

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