

## At a Crossing of Compositions: Sibelius's Manuscripts for *Cassazione*

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Jean Sibelius's orchestral work *Cassazione* Op. 6 has never attracted much notice or interest in the literature; it has been rated merely as an ad hoc composition.<sup>[1]</sup> In the literature, 1904 has been given as the year of composition for the version for full orchestra, and 1905 for its reworking in the version for small orchestra.<sup>[2]</sup> It is possible that Sibelius composed *Cassazione* rather quickly early in 1904, but in the light of musical manuscripts, the story of the work's genesis seems to have begun much earlier. The composer had collected musical material that appears in *Cassazione* over a period of several years, and possibly pieced the work together during a short period of time from materials drafted earlier. The lengthy gathering of the musical ideas and materials on Sibelius's manuscript pages also meant that numerous other compositions were taking shape in parallel with the evolution and selection of materials for *Cassazione*. In this article, I shall survey the connections between *Cassazione* and the surrounding works completed either before or after it in the light of the surviving sketch materials.

The surviving sketch material related to *Cassazione* is extensive.<sup>[3]</sup> Defining the chronology of the materials is very difficult. However, the manuscripts related to the material used in the work were probably written during two periods, in approximately 1897–1899 and 1901–1904. These materials are more or less directly connected to twelve other pieces completed either before or after *Cassazione* within a period of thirteen years, namely the First Symphony, Op. 39 (first version completed in 1899), the Violin Concerto, Op. 47 (first version completed in 1904), *Cortège* for orchestra, JS 54 (1905), the Symphonic Fantasy *Pohjolas Tochter*, Op. 49 (1906), the song *Aus banger Brust*, Op. 50 No. 4 (1906), the Dance Intermezzo *Pan und Echo*, Op. 53 (1906), the Third Symphony, Op. 52 (completed in 1907), the piano pieces *Air varié* and *Ständchen* Op. 58 Nos 3 and 9 (completed at the latest in 1909), the Funeral March *In memoriam*, Op. 59 (1909), the Fourth Symphony, Op. 63 (1911), and the opening movement, *Die Jagd*, of the Orchestral Suite *Scènes historiques II*, Op. 66 (1912).

As mentioned, Sibelius probably set down the earliest materials appearing in *Cassazione* on his sketch pages in the late 1890s. The sketches and drafts from that period illustrate various stages of thematic materials originating from compositional work on the First Symphony. Some of the thematic ideas associating the compositional processes of the Symphony and *Cassazione* also link these works with the piano piece *Air varié*, Op. 58 No. 3, completed a full ten years after completion of the First Symphony and five years after *Cassazione*.

Example 1 shows a draft (HUL 1557, p. [2]) beginning with material that appears in modified form in the *Allegro moderato* closing section from *Cassazione* (mm. 260/270ff.; in A minor in the draft, but in C minor in the completed work).<sup>[4]</sup> After the opening measures and *Cassazione* ideas (in a tentative form), a folksong-like thematic idea appears on staves 3 and 4 (staff 4, mm. 6ff.). This idea did not anchor itself in *Cassazione* in 1904, but is closely related to the melodic ideas of that work. Interestingly, the *Cassazione* ideas in this, probably early, draft are not related to the first version of the work (for full orchestra), but for the later version for small orchestra; the passage beginning in m. 9 on staves 1 and 2 only appears in the version for small orchestra (mm. 324ff.; see Example 1b).

**Example 1a. HUL 1557, p. [2].**

Handwritten musical score for "Cassazione" for small orchestra, staves 1-6. The score is written on six systems of staves. The first system has a large bracket on the left. The second system has the word "gitar" written below. The third system has "Viol" written above. The fourth system has "Viol" written above and "Viol" written below. The fifth system has "Viol" written below. The sixth system has "Viol" written below. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Example 1b. HUL 1557, p. [2], staves 1-6; *Cassazione* for small orchestra, mm. 316-319 and 324-327.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for Example 2a, HUL 0124. The first system contains two staves: the upper staff is in treble clef and the lower in bass clef. It features a melodic line in the treble staff with a fermata over a note, and a rhythmic accompaniment in the bass staff. The second system also has two staves, with the upper staff in treble clef and the lower in bass clef, showing a continuation of the melodic and accompanimental lines. The third system is a single staff in treble clef, with dynamics markings *ff*, *fz*, and *f*. It includes the label 'Fl.' at the beginning and 'Str. *ff*' below the staff. The melodic line in this system is marked with a fermata and a slur.

As can be seen in draft HUL 0124, Example 2a, the folksong-like idea originates from the time of composition of the First Symphony. This draft begins with this idea, but later leads to the slow introduction material of the first movement of the Symphony. It seems that Sibelius at this stage planned to open the Symphony with the folksong-like idea. This melody did not come to anchor itself in *Cassazione* in 1904, either, but appears five years later, in 1909, in the piano piece *Air varié* (Example 2b). It also can be found in sketches connected the song *Aus banger Brust*, and very typically thematic material shared between *Cassazione*, *Aus banger Brust* and *Air varié* manifests itself in the drafts as different combinations and variations of the three melodic phrases shown in Examples 3a–d.

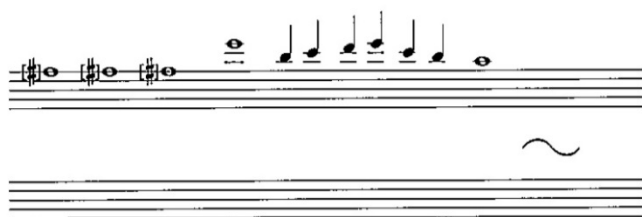
**Example 2a. HUL 0124.**

*Allegro moderato*

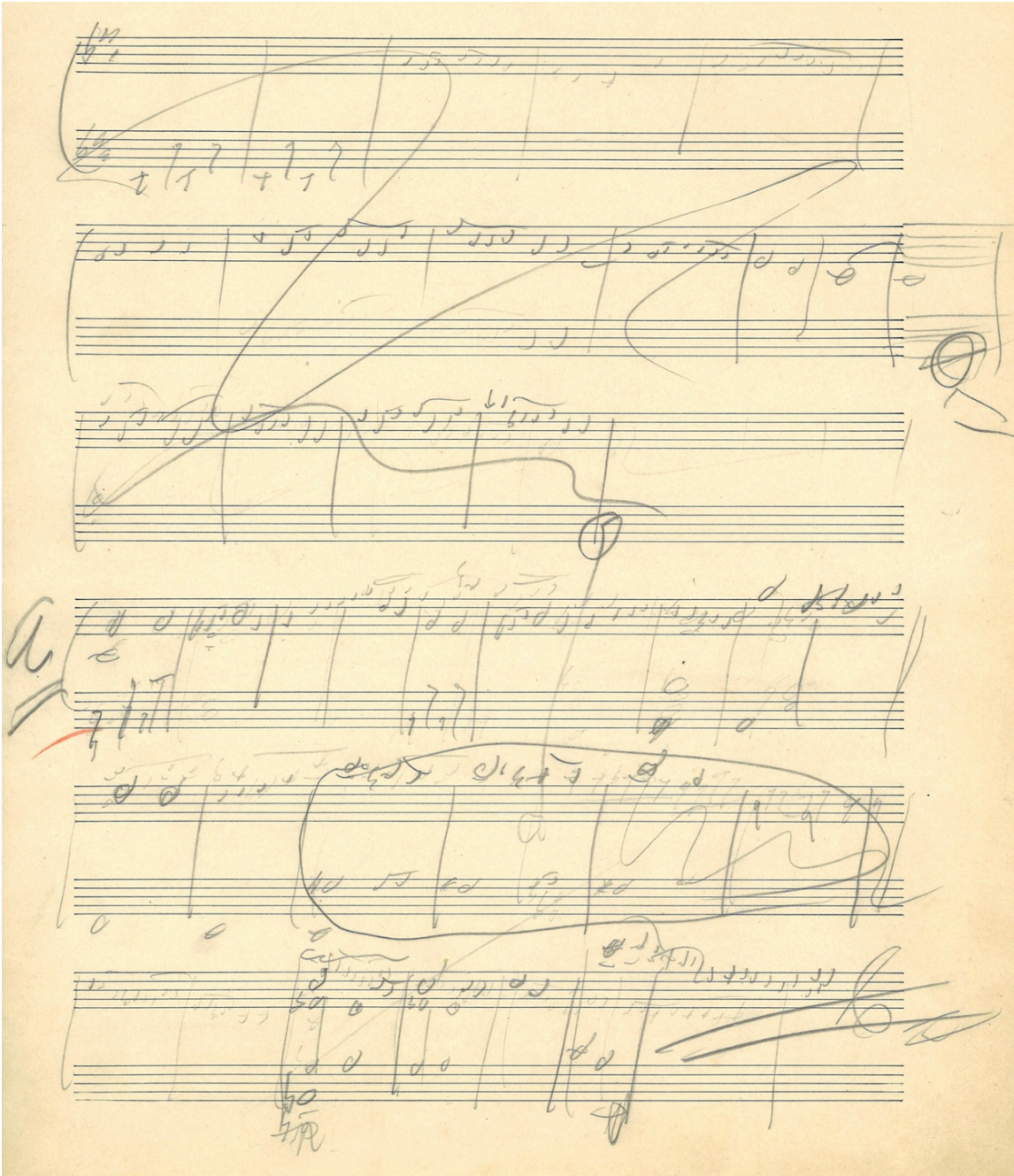
The image displays a handwritten musical score for a piano piece. At the top left, the tempo is indicated as "Allegro moderato". The score is organized into two systems. The first system contains the first two staves of the piece, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second system contains staves 12 through 17. The notation is dense, featuring a variety of note values, rests, and accidentals. Dynamic markings such as "p" (piano) and "pp" (pianissimo) are visible throughout the score. The handwriting is clear and legible, typical of a composer's manuscript.

Example 2b. HUL 0124, staves 1–2 and 12–17; *Air varié* Op. 58 No. 3, mm. 7–8

Allegromoderat



Example 3a. HUL 1594, p. [1].



Example 3b. HUL 1594, p. [1], staves 1 and 3.



Example 3c. HUL 1130, p. [2].

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation on three staves. The notation is dense and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and clefs. The first staff begins with a treble clef and contains several measures of music. The second staff starts with a bass clef and includes a handwritten note 'Chino ='. The third staff also begins with a bass clef and features a handwritten note 'Aus'. The handwriting is fluid and characteristic of a composer's sketch. There are some additional markings, including a large arrow pointing to the first staff and some scribbles at the end of the third staff.

Example 3d. *Cassazione* (staff 1), *Air varié* (staff 1), *Aus banger Brust* (staff 3).



In the light of these examples, the linkage between the First Symphony and *Cassazione* is not immediately obvious because the thematic materials which appear in the Symphony do not occur in the same manuscripts as those which eventually appear in *Cassazione*. However, the folksong-like melody originally connected with the First Symphony materials is a kind of prototype of the thematic idea appearing in *Cassazione* and thus creates a link between the Symphony plans and *Cassazione*; thus, the linkage could be characterized as indirect. Furthermore, the folksong-like idea also creates a link to two other works. It runs like a thread from the plans for the Symphony, through *Cassazione* and *Aus banger Brust*, and finally appears in *Air varié*. This chain of compositions exemplifies how multidimensional the concept of a sketch can be, such that it can migrate from one evolving piece to another.

Thematic connections between materials for the Violin Concerto, *Cortège*, *Pan and Echo*, and *Cassazione* are also revealed in some of the sketches and drafts. That the Concerto is one of the closest siblings of *Cassazione* is not at all surprising: both works were composed in parallel in 1903–1904 and also premiered in the same concert in February 1904. In draft HUL 0471, p. [1], Example 4a, the slow-movement theme of the Concerto is in A major, and the *Cassazione* material follows the theme on p. [2] (Example 4b), on a G-sharp pedal in the bass.<sup>[5]</sup> Sibelius has connected the Violin Concerto and *Cassazione* materials with a pencil line from p. [1] to p. [2], but later crossed out the continuation familiar from *Cassazione* (mm. 48ff. in both versions of the work).

**Example 4a. HUL 0471, p. [1].**



*Adagio sostenuto*

The image shows a handwritten musical score for piano, titled "Adagio sostenuto". The score is written on seven systems of staves. The first system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a common time signature (C) and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music is written in a flowing, melodic style with various note values and rests. The second system continues the melody in the treble clef. The third system shows the bass clef part with some complex rhythmic patterns. The fourth system features a mix of treble and bass clef parts. The fifth system is primarily bass clef with some treble clef notes. The sixth system is mostly bass clef with some treble clef notes. The seventh system concludes the piece with a final cadence in the bass clef. The handwriting is clear and legible, with some dynamic markings like "p" (piano) and "f" (forte) visible. The paper shows signs of age and wear.

Example 4b. HUL 0471, p. [2].



Manuscript HUL 0472 includes several drafts featuring materials for the Violin Concerto and *Cassazione*. Page [4] of the manuscript is a kind of thematic plan for materials appearing in *Cassazione*. One of the fragments shows a connection with *Pan and Echo* (Example 5). On the first staves, annotated with the Roman numeral I, Sibelius has notated ideas which appear at the opening of *Cassazione*. On staves 3–8 occurs material (annotated “II”) which appears in mm. 48ff. in *Cassazione*, and this passage is seamlessly followed by a thematic idea subsequently taken up in *Pan and Echo* (beginning on staff 7).

**Example 5. HUL 0472, p. [4].**



Also the links between *Cassazione* and *Cortège*, as well as *Cassazione* and the song *Ständchen* are revealed in single drafts. HUL 1486, p. [2], Example 6a, is a draft beginning with *Cortège* music in ink (without key signature, but in an understood E major), but leading (after two blank measures) to pencilled material related to *Cassazione* (now in E minor; cf. Example 6b). Both the *Cortège* and the *Cassazione* materials are in 3/4 meter.

**Example 6a.** HUL 1486, p. [2].

The image shows five staves of handwritten musical notation. The notation is dense and includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The word "Dauer" is written in the second staff. The notation is written in a cursive, handwritten style. The staves are connected by a large bracket on the left side. The notation includes various notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as "p" and "Dauer".

Example 6b. HUL 1486, p. [2], staves 8–10; *Cassazione*, mm. 18–27 (Tr. I, Cor. I).

The image displays three staves of musical notation. The top staff is a piano accompaniment, with a treble clef on the upper line and a bass clef on the lower line. It features a syncopated rhythm in the first measure, with a quarter note on the second beat and an eighth note on the first beat. The middle staff is for a Trumpet in F (Tr. in F) and a Cor in F (Cor. in F), with dynamics *ff*, *dim.*, and *ff*. The bottom staff is a single melodic line with a trill-like ornament and a fermata.

Connections between the themes appearing in the Third Symphony and *Cassazione* are close and apparent. The materials for the second movement of the Symphony in particular were interwoven with those intended for *Cassazione*. Because the thematic sketches for the second movement probably represent the earliest layer of materials for the Symphony and derive from the very first years of the 20th century, it seems more likely that the drafts exemplifying the connection between the Symphony and *Cassazione* derive from that period, i.e., Sibelius did not intend to reuse the *Cassazione* materials in the Symphony in his plans after 1904.<sup>[6]</sup> One of the most interesting manuscripts showing the second-movement theme of the Symphony and *Cassazione* materials combined is the draft HUL 0274, p. 2 (Example 7). The draft begins with a funeral-march-like music in C minor and in 4/4 (or 2/2) meter. This passage appears in the Symphony movement (in G sharp minor and transformed into 6/4 meter). On staff 3, m. 3 (i.e., the third measure of the second system), an idea enters that is characterized by a syncopated rhythm (two sixteenth notes–quarter note–eighth note) in the second half of the first measure, which Sibelius eventually placed in the *Allegro moderato* section of *Cassazione*.

**Example 7.** HUL 0274, p. [2], staves 1–16.



Even though the second movement of the Third Symphony is in 6/4 meter, the association with a funeral march may still be valid – however, in *Cassazione*, the *Allegro moderato* section hardly bears any resemblance to its past incarnation as a “funeral-march.”<sup>[7]</sup> Possibly related to this genesis, the fragments in manuscript HUL 1585 constitute a further network of ideas for different compositions – originally intended for a single composition – in a highly compact form (Example 8a). The fragment opens with an idea – helpfully labeled “a” by the composer himself – which appears in the funeral march *In memoriam* in 1909 (cf. Example 8b).<sup>[8]</sup> This idea is followed by “b,” a short passage appearing in *Pohjola’s Daughter* (1906), and still later a trill idea familiar from *Cassazione* (“c”). The same materials appear further down the page in a different order on the two staves crossed out in pencil (staves 6 and 7 in the Example).<sup>[9]</sup>

**Example 8a. HUL 1556, staves 5–16.**

Handwritten musical score for Example 8b, consisting of six staves. The notation is dense and includes various musical symbols such as clefs, notes, rests, and dynamic markings. There are some scribbles and corrections in the upper staves.

Example 8b. HUL 1585, staves 5 and 6; *In memoriam*, mm. 29–32 (Vc.); *Pohjola's Daughter*, mm. 29–32 (VI. I); *Cassazione*, mm. 133–134 (Fl. I solo).

Musical score for *Cassazione*, mm. 133–134, featuring a treble and bass clef staff. The treble staff has three measures labeled 'a', 'b', and 'c'. The bass staff has corresponding notes and rests.

Musical score for *In memoriam*, mm. 29–32, for Violoncello (Vc.). The staff shows a melodic line starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic and moving to forte.

Musical score for *Pohjola's Daughter*, mm. 29–32, for Violin I (VI. I). The staff shows a melodic line with fortissimo (*ff*) dynamics.

Musical score for *Cassazione*, mm. 133–134, for Flute I solo (Fl. I solo). The staff shows a melodic line with trills.

If the origins of *Cassazione* are at least indirectly linked with the compositional process of the First Symphony in the late 1890s, the next examples illustrate the opposite chronological end of the materials related to the work. Manuscript HUL 0078 features the opening (ca. mm. 5–35) of *Cassazione* nearly in its final form. The continuation leads to a passage containing phrases appearing in the Finale of the Fourth Symphony, transformed to a chorale-like thematic idea in the horns (see Examples 9a and 9b).[\[10\]](#)

**Example 9a. HUL 0078, p. [3], staves 1–14.**

The image shows a handwritten musical score on ten staves. The first staff is a grand staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. The word "Allegro moderato" is written in cursive above the first staff. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The score is written in ink on aged paper with some visible smudges and corrections.

**Example 9b. HUL 0078, p. [3], beginning in the middle of staff 9 and continuing on staves 11, and 13; Symphony No. 4, mvt IV, mm. 159–167 (Cor. I).**





Cor. in E



The draft on manuscript HUL 0272, p. [1], Example 10, opens with a fanfare-like idea, and the following measures contain material eventually appearing in 1912 in the first movement, titled *Die Jagd*, of the Orchestral Suite *Scènes historiques II*.<sup>[11]</sup> The measures 5ff. on staves 3 and 4 present the *Allegro moderato* section theme of *Cassazione* (see also Example 3a above).

**Example 10a. HUL 0272, p. [1].**



Example 10b. *Die Jagd*, mm. 1–10 (Cor. I, II).



If we consider the way in which the folksong-like idea familiar from the manuscripts for the First Symphony and the *Cassazione* ideas wandered through several compositional plans and finally appeared (in modified form) in the piano piece *Air varié*, in the funeral march *In memoriam*, in the Fourth Symphony and in the *Scènes historiques II*, the network of the compositional ideas for Sibelius's compositions from the last years of the 19th century to the year 1912 begin to appear multidimensional indeed. It also should be added that Sibelius returned to the (unpublished) *Cassazione* materials as late in his compositional career as 1926, when he used the hymn-like passage of *Cassazione* as the *Epilogue* of his incidental music for Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*.

*Cassazione* has often been regarded merely as a marginal composition among Sibelius's many significant works from the early 1900s. However, as the sketches reveal, the musical ideas appearing in or related with *Cassazione* were not at all marginal in the composer's creative imagination. On the contrary, the manuscripts for *Cassazione* illustrate a fecundity of fruitful musical ideas, a highly fascinating and - even in Sibelius's case - exceptional example of the compositional processes of several works intermingled. Thus, *Cassazione*, a piece seldom performed and heard, and

which Sibelius left unpublished, even appears to be a key work in the developing network of Sibelius's compositions and compositional plans for over nearly fifteen years.

## REFERENCES

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[1] This attitude towards the work was evident already in the first newspaper reviews; see the Introduction in *Jean Sibelius Works, Series I, Volume 11; Cassazione Op. 6* (ed. Timo Virtanen; Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 2011).

[2] The date 1905 associated with the version for small orchestra probably originates from Erik Tawaststjerna's biography *Jean Sibelius. Åren 1893–1904* (Helsingfors: Söderströms & Co., 1994). For a discussion about the more probable date (before December 1904), see the Introduction in Virtanen (ed.) 2011.

[3] For an overview, see the Introduction and List of Sketches in Virtanen (ed.) 2011, pp. VIII and 95–96.

[4] The double bar numbering (260/270) refers to the version for full orchestra and the version for small orchestra, respectively.

[5] In some of the early sketches, the key of the first movement of the Concerto is C sharp minor. Thus, in the early sketches, the (major-third) key relationship between the two first movements (C sharp minor–A major) seems to anticipate the key relationship in the final Concerto (D minor–B flat major).

[6] For the manuscripts for the Third Symphony, see Virtanen 2005. Tawaststjerna drew attention to certain thematic/rhythmic affinities between a theme from *Cassazione* and the Finale "hymn" theme of the Third Symphony (see Tawaststjerna 1994, p. 228).

[7] For a discussion of this association, see Virtanen 2005, esp. p. 136.

[8] On one of Sibelius's manuscript pages the idea appearing in *In memoriam* has been titled *Memento mori*. In the literature, the origin of *In memoriam* has been associated with the general governor Bobrikoff's assassination – or, more precisely, to the assassin's (Eugen Schauman) suicide – in June 1904 or Sibelius's sojourn in Berlin in 1905, when he, according to Karl Ekman, would have invented the "idea" of the work (see Tawaststjerna 1991, 191; and Ekman 1956, 284). However, it is clear that some thematic ideas appearing in the work derive from a date preceding the completion of *Cassazione*. On one of Sibelius's manuscript pages the idea appearing in *In memoriam* has been titled *Memento mori*.

[9] Not directly connected with these fragments, after an empty staff, Sibelius has notated a sketch for the scene *Trois soeurs aveugles* ("Three Blind Sisters") from the incidental music to Maurice Maeterlinck's play *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Op. 46 (1905).

[10] This idea also was associated with the orchestral song "Der Rabe" (German translation of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven*, which Sibelius used as the text for the work planned for soprano Aino Ackté in 1910) that preceded the final Symphony movement.

[11] Also the two other movements of *Scènes historiques II* contain materials from earlier composition plans: movement II (*Minnelied*) originates from the “Luonnotar” plan of 1906 (see Virtanen 2001), and the closing *Andante* section of movement III (*An der Zugbrücke*) is based on music from the third part of the Promotion Cantata of 1894.

### **Timo Virtanen**

Timo Virtanen completed his Doctor of Music degree at the Sibelius Academy (Helsinki) with his dissertation *Jean Sibelius, Symphony No. 3: Manuscript Study and Analysis* in 2006. He joined the editorial staff of the complete critical edition *Jean Sibelius Works (JSW)* in 1997, and since 2006 he has worked as the editor-in-chief of the project. For the *JSW* Virtanen has edited the *Symphonies Nos 1 and 3*, and his editions of *Cassazione*, Op. 6 (two versions) and the *Violin Concerto* are in preparation. He is also a member in the editorial staff of the recently published anthology *Sibelius in the Old and New World. Aspects of His Music, its Interpretation, and Reception* (Sibelius Forum III) (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2010). In 2009 Virtanen was appointed as docent of music philology at the Sibelius Academy. <http://www.kansalliskirjasto.fi/kulttuuritoiminta/sibelius/toimittajat.html>