

Which of Sibelius's 379 miniatures are remarkable?

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"Auch kleine Dinge können uns entzücken..." (Paul Heyse)

Reckoning that Sibelius's compositions amount to circa 600 separate pieces (youth works included, fragments omitted), we have to consider that roughly more than half of them are miniatures. I have calculated that nearly 380 original, separate pieces last less than 4 minutes. If we reject only Sibelius's miniatures, we omit practically half his production.

'I am a man of the orchestra', Sibelius proclaimed. Needless to say, his successful orchestral works, generally regarded as national monuments in Finland, are impressive frescos; nonetheless, these large-scale pieces are full of carefully elaborated details. What about the painstakingly worked-out details in his small works? Do they lack credibility because they are included in miniatures? Sibelius 'forged' the motifs and melodies in the small pieces no less carefully, sometimes referring to his miniatures as his 'suffering pieces' or 'pain pieces'[\[1\]](#). Probably he would not have referred to them in this way if he had not valued them highly.

The designation 'salon piece' is clumsy as applied to Sibelius's miniatures. Very few of them were purposely composed as standard salon music – they are all too refined and abstract, and lack the lax and redundant reiterations so typical of such pieces. Perhaps the *Valse lyrique*, Op. 96a, approaches a real salon piece, but the material soars far above standard salon vocabulary, the lyrical sections, for example, revealing remarkable intimacy and character.

Nowadays, it is common to employ the designation 'Salon music' in a pejorative sense. However, 'salon music' is a far from unambiguous genre, with many different historical significations. In the early 19th century, since many big concert halls did not yet exist, especially spacious home salons served an important function as musical forums; thus, "salon music" necessarily encompassed a wide range of styles and conventions. And especially in the Russian and French musical life, the salon was perhaps the main venue for the new chamber music, not demanding symphonic forces.

Sibelius's small pieces have been described as 'cutoffs' from the workshop of the large-scale orchestral pieces. I disagree because the small pieces seem to follow different rules than the big ones. Where is the piano composition 'cutoff' from the Fifth Symphony? Is the song *Våren flyktar hastigt*, Op. 13/4 (Vienna 1891), a 'off-cut' from the process of composing *Kullervo*? Certainly not! This song of only one and a half minutes' duration is one of Sibelius's aphoristic, witty miniatures: real proof that a miniature can be a true masterwork. It is the most popular composition from Sibelius's year of study in Vienna. Trying to find features of *Kullervo* in *Våren flyktar hastigt* is like trying to observe the traits of an oak tree in a rose. Is it fair that flowers should be reproached for not being oaks? However, observing characteristic features of the big works in the small ones is of course a natural thing to do – as long as it does not become the key criterion of a quality evaluation. If we want to find a song in the Op. 13 collection reminiscent of *Kullervo*, then it is quite possibly *Under strandens granar*, Op. 13/1, the tremolo structures of which create great dramatic tension, as in the third movement of *Kullervo*. And for instance, the "Karelian" piano style of, say, the six Impromptus Op. 5 and the Sonata in F major Op. 12, reflect stylistic features close to the *Kullervo*.

Fortunately there is also a canon of highly appreciated small pieces. Cherished works are for example:

1) less than 1 minute: *Pièce enfantine* Op. 76/8, *Valsette*, Op. 40/1 (a must for all piano students), *Capriccietto* Op. 76/12 (the utmost peak of artistically condensed, aphoristic details), *Blåsippan* ('The Blue Anemone') Op. 88/1, *Vilse* ('Astray') Op. 17/4, *Wattendroppar* JS 216, etc.;

2) duration from 1 to 2 minutes: *Sortunut ääni* Op. 18/1, *Rondino* Op. 81/2, *Etude* Op. 76/2, *Souda, souda sinisorsa* JS 180, the 'Ripachka' Impromptu Op. 5/2, *Illalle* Op. 17/6 (what sublime evening tranquillity lasting less than 2 minutes!), *On hanget korkeat nietokset* Op. 1/5, etc.;

3) duration from 2 to 3 minutes: *Sydämeni laulu* Op. 18/6, *Aquileja* ('The Columbine') Op. 85/4, *Var det en dröm?* Op. 37/4, the ever-green *Novellette* Op. 102 (the shortest of all Sibelius's original opuses, lasting altogether 2'45"), and so on.

But is this selection of miniatures by Sibelius the right one? Of the more than a hundred solo songs, for example, roughly only a dozen are frequently performed, the remainder being banished to the archives and accorded only the most cursory attention. For more than 50–60 years, performers and listeners have focused on just a very few pieces. What about the rest? Left unperformed, they recede from view. If a singer gathers the courage to perform the seldom-heard *Soluppgång* ('Sunrise') Op. 37/3, friends say in advance 'what a brave thing to do, good luck!' Since *Soluppgång* insufficiently resembles the Violin Concerto it cannot be really important music by Sibelius. A thorough re-evaluation of all the miniatures is thus desperately needed.

In support to my discussion, I present a survey of Sibelius's independent small pieces of up to 4 minutes' duration, and also so-called 'character pieces' lasting from 4 to 6 minutes. Personally, I find my table surprising. Do Sibelius's small compositions constitute the overwhelming majority of his works?

Sibelius's miniatures and character pieces lasting 0–6 minutes, a table per genres

MINUTES	MINUTES	MINUTES	MINUTES	MINUTES	MINUTES
0–1	1–2	2–3	3–4	4–5	5–6
A.Orch.works					
–	–	2	–	1	4
B.Works for solo instrument & orch.					
–	–	1	4	2	1
C.Works for string orch.					
–	–	–	–	2	–
D.Works for wind instr.					
–	–	–	1	2	1
E.Chamber music with piano					
–	1	1	3	2	–
F.Chamber music without piano					
3	2	4	2	2	4
G.Solo instrument & piano (VI/Pf, Vc/Pf)					
5	7	19	15	7	2
H.Violin or cello solo					
1	2	–	–	1	–
I)Piano					
11	64	40	20	13	4
J.Works for organ or kantele					
–	–	1	3	–	2
K.Stage music					
–	–	1	7	1	2
L.Choir with accompaniment					
–	2	7	2	2	2
M.Choir a cappella					
–	22	20	6	4	–
N.Song with orchestra					
–	–	–	1	–	2
O.Lieder					
5	30	43	15	5	1

P.Melodramas					
–	–	1	1	1	–
R.Liturgical music					
–	2	2	–	–	–
TOTALS					
25	132	142	80	45	25

Miniatures with the duration 0'00–3'59" minutes: 379

Character pieces, duration 4'00"–5'59" minutes: 70

I need to explain the final numbers in the Table. The large collections of songs or piano pieces – for example, Eight Songs Op. 57, or Thirteen Piano Pieces Op. 76 – do not constitute unified suites with an initial opening movement, tranquil inner movements for contrast, and a brilliant piece as a finale. Rather, the songs or the piano pieces in these opuses are to be regarded as separate, independent compositions simply gathered together as an unorganized string of items. This contention is supported by the fact that the overwhelming majority of these pieces were initially published separately as independent compositions. If, nevertheless, we were to hypothesize an overall tonal plan for some of the larger collections, we would arrive at strange results. Let us consider some of the opuses.

Why does the collection of Six Impromptus Op. 5, fade out with a resigned, lyrical atmosphere pianissimo in E minor? It is doubtful that this conclusion is in any way related to the sombre, partially very turbulent G minor opening of the first two Impromptus Op. 5/1–2, reminiscent of the finale of the Piano Quintet in G minor JS 159. Indeed, there appears to be no planned tonal connection between opening and concluding pieces in such collections as:

Key of first piece Key of last piece

[Five Pieces for violin and piano]

G major A major

(JS 86, 89, 4, 49, 3, composed in 1886–87)

Op. 5 Six Impromptus

G minor E major–E minor

Op. 34 Ten Bagatelles for piano

D flat major A minor

However, the beginning and concluding pieces are both waltzes.

Op. 36 Six Songs

C major–C sharp minor B flat major

Op. 40 Ten Pensées lyriques

E minor C major

Op. 50 Six Songs

G flat major D major

Op. 58 Ten Pieces for piano

D flat major E flat major

Op. 75 Five Pieces for piano 'The Trees'

G minor

B minor

Op. 90 Six Songs
A minor–C major B flat major

Op. 101 *Five Romantic Compositions* for piano
C major D major

Op. 116 Three Pieces for violin and piano
G sharp minor D major

Considering some other collections, there may be a tonal connection between the opening and concluding pieces:

Op. 2 Two Pieces for violin and piano
B minor C major

Performed together, the tonic B of the opening Romance may be the leading tone of the *Perpetuum mobile* in C major, with the function: tension – resolution. *The Romance* (1889–90) and *Perpetuum mobile* (1891) were revised in 1911, and the latter as more developed received a new title, *Epilogue*. But the overall tonal plan remained: the key B minor of the revised Romance still may function as a leading tone to the *Epilogue* in C major, although the opening organ point of the *Epilogue* on the dominant G is tonally more ambiguous than the equivalent in the predecessor *Perpetuum mobile*.

Op. 24 Ten Pieces for piano
G minor G minor

There are eight extended pieces between the beginning and end. Could the G minor tonality of the Impromptu Op. 24/1, be recalled as the listener ultimately reaches the *Barcarola* in G minor Op. 24/10? If conceived as a tonally unified whole, a very special feature would be the tonal shift of a tritone from the famous *Romance* in D flat major Op. 24/9, to the very dark shadows of the G minor key of the *Barcarola*. I adhere to the generally accepted idea that the ten pieces of Op. 24 are separate compositions, and they have almost always in practice been performed as separate items. Unfortunately, complete performances are very rare indeed.

Op. 37 Five Song
B flat minor/D flat major – C sharp minor
D flat major – C sharp minor

If we regard the opening typically Sibelian sixth chord of *Den första kyssten* Op. 37/1, as a tonic triad, D flat–F–A flat with a ‘sixte ajoutée’ B flat added, albeit lacking the fifth A flat, we could regard this song as possessing an opening in majestic D flat, the same key as the concluding song *Flickan kom ifrån sin älsklings möte*, Op. 37/5, and both songs’ lavish D flat major tonalities transformed into C sharp minor at the end. At our concert on 1 September 2002 in Grieg’s home Troldhaugen, at the concert hall Troldsalen, the soprano Marjatta Airas and I performed the full collection of the Five Songs Op. 37, with the purpose of trying to sense the unity of the complete opus. However, we did not experience these five songs relating to each other in terms of creating an overall logical, dramaturgic arch; rather each seemed to have a distinct, conspicuously independent profile of its own. This impression was reinforced by the stark difference of status of the five songs – *Den första kyssten*, *Var det en dröm?* and *Flickan kom ifrån sin älsklings möte* have been acknowledged and celebrated as masterpieces for many decades, whereas *Lasse liten* and *Soluppgång* are seldom performed curiosities.

Possible exceptions include:

Op. 38 Five songs
D sharp minor E major

As in Op. 2, the tonic of the opening piece may function as the leading tone to the final one; however, it is highly doubtful that this relationship will be perceived in performance. Three remarkable songs intervene in – C minor, F major and E minor (VM: ends in h minor!) – but perhaps these keys create a kind of a balance?

Op. 103 *Five Characteristic Impressions*
C major C minor

Here the brilliant C major key of *The Village Church* is transformed to finish in C minor in the concluding piece *In Mournful Mood*, with the same prevailing tonic, C. I would claim that this framing key scheme is really experienced.

What about *Kyllikki, Three Lyrical Pieces*, Op. 41? Are the three pieces separate or integrated movements? In this case, I do consider the three pieces one integrated composition. If the third piece were played alone, it would sound like a concluding third movement absent the main body of the work. Therefore, I have not counted the third Kyllikki piece as an independent miniature lasting 3 minutes.

Glenda Dawn Goss presents the following opuses as collections as independent compositions:[\[2\]](#)

Songs with piano: Op. 1, 13, 17, 35, 36, 37, 38, 50, 57, 60, 61, 72, 86, 88, 90
 Violin and piano: Op. 2, 77, 78, 79, 81, 106
 Piano works: Op. 5, 24, 34, 40, 58, 67[\[3\]](#), 68, 74, 75, 76, 85, 94, 96[\[4\]](#), 97, 99, 101, 103, 114
 Choir Songs[\[5\]](#) a cappella: Op. 18, 65, 84, 108
 Violin and orchestra: Op. 69[\[6\]](#), 87, 89

Andrew Barnett has suggested that some of the piano miniatures could have been imagined to serve as incidental music since in character and format they are surprisingly close to many movements of the theatre-music compositions. Indeed, Sibelius organized his music for the plays in such a way that they are often distinct small pieces rather than a lavish background of continuous music which is ‘durchkomponiert’. While individual numbers can be discerned within Sibelius’s theatre music, nonetheless traditionally these pieces have been regarded as forming a coherent composition. Hence, in Goss’s work list, the following opus numbers represent only a single composition, each containing a number of subordinate pieces:

Theatre or Tableau Music Works: Op. 8, 11, 25, 27, 44, 46, 51, 54, 66, 71, 83, 109

Would it not be tempting to regard a brisk miniature like the *Musette* from the incidental music to *King Christian II* as a completely independent composition? It would; but in my diagrams I follow Goss’s principle, regarding each group of theatre-music numbers as a single composition. Quite often they are represented in three different ways: the original theatre score (often not even with an opus number), the concert suite for orchestra assigned an opus number (consistently comprising fewer numbers than the theatre music), and finally a suite of original arrangements for piano in the cases of Op. 10 and Op. 11, Op. 27, Op. 44/1, Op. 46, Op. 51, Op. 54, Op. 66, Op. 71, Op. 83, and Op. 109, which include either all, almost all or just some numbers of the original incidental music, always with opus number.

An exception may be made with the two songs Op. 60, composed for Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, which Goss treats as two separate compositions; to be sure, they are sufficiently disparate in character to be treated like that. But then the incidental music to the play *Kuolema* becomes problematic. Should not the *Valse triste* be regarded as the most glorious example of a strong Sibelian separate number? In spite of its hypertrophied success as one of the most famous waltzes of all time, the fact of its origin as a subordinate item of the incidental music to the play remains. Moreover, Sibelius numbered the original music of *Kuolema* as Op. 44, and the additional pieces as Op. 62 – here, then, we have at least two different complexes of pieces organized by the composer himself![\[7\]](#)

In the main table of this article, then, I present a seemingly exact number of Sibelius’s independent miniatures fully conscious of the fact that, in a stricter sense, this figure is only an approximation. Still, I would claim that the total of 379 miniatures by Sibelius lasting less than 4 minutes is relatively accurate. The categories represented by capital letters in my diagram are adapted from Kari Kilpeläinen’s manuscript catalogue of 1991[\[8\]](#), as well as in part from Dahlström’s comprehensive catalogue of Sibelius’s music, published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 2003[\[9\]](#).

Here follow some considerations according to genre.

B) Works for solo instrument and orchestra

MINUTES					
0–1	1–2	2–3	3–4	4–5	5–6
COMPOSITIONS					
–	–	1	4	2	1

The Humoresques, Op. 87 and Op. 89, are the main works in this genre. Admirable compositions, they attain the top level of performance frequency within the total oeuvre of Sibelius. Here an orchestral miniature of three minutes' duration is, nonetheless, regarded as a full-fledged masterpiece.

F) Chamber music without piano

MINUTES					
0–1	1–2	2–3	3–4	4–5	5–6
COMPOSITIONS					
3	2	4	2	2	4

Sibelius's masterpiece of chamber music for strings is, of course, the String Quartet 'Voces intimae' Op. 56, composed during the same period as the Fourth Symphony. *Wattendroppar* JS 216 is probably the most famous miniature lasting less than one minute. A few more chamber works are performed frequently:

Suite in A major for string trio JS 186 (1889)

Fuga för Martin Wegelius ('Fugue for Martin Wegelius'), for string quartet JS 85 (1889)

String Trio in G minor JS 210 (1893–94)

These pieces are but a small fraction of Sibelius's output of string chamber music. If we find the 'Wegelius' Fugue thrilling, why does the String Quartet in A minor JS 183 (1889), from which the fugue was rejected, remain ignored? Finnish string quartets simply do not dare to perform anything other than the 'Voces intimae' quartet, and listeners both in Finland and abroad seem quite happy to praise one masterwork and reject the rest as rubbish. Some professional Finnish string players do not even know that there is an original string-quartet piece called *Andante festivo* JS 34a (1922)[\[10\]](#).

When even an important work assigned an opus number like the String Quartet in B flat major Op. 4 (1889–90), languishes unperformed, it is difficult to promote the many witty, surprisingly well-written string-quartet miniatures that Sibelius lavishly produced during his Helsinki years, especially during 1888–1889.

G) Solo instrument + piano (VI/Pf, Vlc/Pf)

MINUTES					
0–1	1–2	2–3	3–4	4–5	5–6
COMPOSITIONS					
5	7	19	15	7	2

Considering the spectacularly advanced structures of Symphonies Nos. 5, 6 and 7, we are inclined to regard techniques of counterpoint and skilfully varied harmonic structures as self-evident qualifications, not to say virtues, of a piece by Sibelius. If we consider the frequency of performances of Sibelius's pieces for violin and piano, we find these virtues altogether forgotten, almost blatantly reversed: statistically, the 'advanced' compositions are gathering dust in the archives, whereas the most performed piece is one of the simplest in structure: the disarmingly melodic *Romance* in F major Op. 78/2, performed innumerable times by both violinists and cellists[\[11\]](#). Sibelius was worried by this piece, and confided to his diary his thoughts about it on 10th January 1915[\[12\]](#):

"I am repentant about the Romance of yesterday. Maybe it is too traditional?"

Another unlikely winner is the almost embarrassingly simple, if not to say whimsical small *Rondino* Op. 81/2 (1917), which is performed too slowly if it lasts the full duration of two minutes. But if a masterpiece is defined by an unexpectedly high number of performances, then the *Rondino* is a true masterpiece. Indeed, there are some similarly cheerful 'sunny' small violin pieces among Sibelius's youth production, which in quality do not seem inferior to the mature pieces like the *Rondino*. Here is an opinion about the earliest of Sibelius's youthful pieces for violin and piano from Hilarly Finch writing in *The Times* in 2000: 'We THOUGHT we knew Sibelius, but the past decade exhumed much revelatory unheard music. You can just sit back and revel in the Nordic Viennoiserie of Sibelius's little apprentice Sonata in A minor, enjoy the whims of the little Menuettos and Andantes.'

Listening to captivating melodies by Sibelius is something not regarded as *comme-il-faut* at least in Finland. Nevertheless, it is worth remembering that producing well-shaped melodies runs like a red thread through all of Sibelius's production from the very first piano trio pieces of 1883 until the visionary broad phrasing arches of the four-hand *Adagio 'Rakkaalle Ainolle'* from 1931. In a famous utterance, Richard Strauss gave full credit to Sibelius's melodic inventiveness.^[13] Refusing to listen to the melodic treasures of one's own country would be regarded as absurd in many countries. Austrians have no problem in enjoying the most unpretentious of Schubert's Ländler melodies, and the Italians are ready to enjoy almost any opera, operetta or canzona tune by their own composers, famous or not. Why should listening to Sibelius's melodies be so very complicated? Yet the many miniature melodies by Sibelius remain little performed and virtually unknown. For many decades, it was impossible to use any of Sibelius's original pieces for violin and piano in the Sibelius Competition in Helsinki. However, finally in the last two competitions, in 2005 and 2010, there has been a change for the better: now it is possible to choose pieces from the sets of the violin pieces Op. 106, *Danses champêtres*, Op. 115 or Op. 116. Among violinists in Helsinki, the four pieces of Op. 115 seem to be held in high esteem.^[14] Quite obviously, there has been a real misunderstanding concerning the style of the above-mentioned late-opus collections. They have been believed to be inferior groups of salon pieces, hence they have not been performed for decades. But the truth is that they are so advanced that both musicians and listeners have been hesitant to approach them.

I) Solo Piano

MINUTES					
0–1	1–2	2–3	3–4	4–5	5–6
COMPOSITIONS					
11	64	40	20	13	4

Since Sibelius's piano music has been heavily criticized, one might expect that it is his weakest genre. But strangely enough, out of a large body of 220 piano pieces of different kinds, there are quite a few pieces that are frequently performed. Of the piano pieces assigned opus numbers, approximately 120 have been recorded. Partly thanks to this, the small selection of standard pieces has been gradually enlarged and varied. The more substantial pieces are frequently performed and recorded. The three Sonatinas Op. 67 have long been respected as peaks within Sibelius's production, and the same could be said about *Kyllikki* Op. 41. Strangely, the only completed Piano Sonata in F major Op. 12 (1893) has not achieved any currency whatsoever. If many adore the stylized folk-music and Romantic idiom of *Kullervo*, Op. 7 (1891–92), why is it that the roughly contemporaneous Piano Sonata in a similar style is ignored? Although Sibelius's piano music is increasingly used for pedagogical purposes, it is striking that both his large and small piano pieces are absent from the programs of public piano recitals, both in Finland and abroad.

A critique of Sibelius's piano pieces would complain that they are less pianistically advanced than, for example, Schumann's big pieces. However, there are many delicate *leggiero* values in Sibelius's piano music, especially in the works composed at Ainola from 1904 on. Speaking of density of structure, the delicate, supple *leggierissimo* piano writing of Sibelius often approaches that found in the sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti and Mozart. But there is the difference: whereas a Mozart melody on the piano is allowed to display an unadorned simplicity, a parallel texture in Sibelius's production is accused of being insufficiently pianistic.

In celebrated piano recitals in Finland, two great Soviet pianists went diametrically against the prevailing anti-miniaturist trend in Finland. In 1974, Emil Gilels devoted a full second half of his program to Grieg miniatures at the Jyväskylä Festival, and Svyatoslav Richter played all-Grieg programs at his recitals in Turku and Helsinki in 1993. Gilels was reproached for not having performed Liszt's Sonata, and Richter's Grieg project was rudely attacked in some of our papers; however, I attended all concerts mentioned, and they were simply wonderful. Planning my first piano recital at Wigmore Hall in London, I asked my friend, Professor Niel Immelman, if he thought it necessary to present only complete-opus collections. He countered that there has been a tradition of performing selected pieces, mentioning that one of his favourite pianists, Annie Fischer, had presented a selection of Brahms works calling the group 'My Favourite Brahms'. Finnish pianists concertizing abroad sometimes construct a group of 'My Favourite Sibelius'. Popular for this purpose have been:

Impromptu Op. 5/5
Caprice Op. 24/3
Romance in D flat major Op. 24/9
Finlandia Op. 26 (original transcription)
The Spruce Op. 75/5

The Etude Op. 76/2
The Village Church Op. 103/1

In his article on Sibelius's miniatures, Veijo Murtomäki suggests that the famous violin *Romance* Op. 78/2, could be preceded by the first item in the opus, the brisk *Impromptu* Op. 78/1 [15]. This sequence is highly recommended because the resulting impact seems greater than that of the pieces by themselves; in this context, 1+1 becomes more than 2. Similarly, the famous piano *Romance* Op. 24/9 could be preceded by the emotional *Nocturne* Op. 24/8, and followed by the sinister *Barcarol* Op. 24/10.

One of the main objections to performing a complete opus comprising miniatures has already been discussed: the problem of the disparate status of the separate items within the same opus, see for example footnote 3 above. The same problem occurs in the groups of Opuses 5, 18, 36, 38, 75, 84, 101, 103, in which the most famous pieces appear to render the less famous embarrassingly inferior. For example, within a full performance of the five 'tree pieces' of Op. 75, the well-known last piece *The Spruce*, Op. 75/5, retrospectively kills the impact of the four preceding compositions, although the earlier 'trees' are wonderful as well, and the final one as the most popular of them can be taken as a bonus. It would be tempting to acquiesce that 'the Spruce is simply a lot better than the rest'. However, once again it has to be borne in mind that this evaluation also is the result of a skewed performance practice over many decades; because of the very short-sighted worshipping of 'Greatest Hits', the true quality of many pieces remains difficult to assess.

Sibelius made his first foreign trips to two very different German venues: first Berlin (1889–1890) and then Vienna (1890–1891). The biographers report how much more Sibelius felt at ease with the more central-European musical taste of Vienna, rather than the conservative seriousness of Berlin. Murtomäki relates that during Sibelius's first visit in Berlin waltzes were still publicly forbidden as frivolous, whereas the citizens of Vienna adored waltzes. [16] Accordingly, during his whole compositional career, Sibelius produced many miniature compositions that would have been well-regarded within the more cheerful Viennese tradition, namely compositions with dance idioms, waltzes, mazurkas, and miniatures like 'pensées lyriques', bagatelles, esquisses, impromptus, and marches, etc. Murtomäki points out that these 'lighter genres' are poorly received in northern but much enjoyed in southern Germany, Austria and Switzerland. [17] A crucial question is: if Sibelius is known to have felt at home in the musical climate of Vienna, why should his music be judged negatively according to north German taste? Yet probably because Finland is closer to northern Germany, Finnish musicologists have tended to ignore dozens of Sibelius's works.

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Some months before my father, the late composer Gottfrid Gräsbeck (1927–2010), passed away, I visited my parents in Turku. Once more I complained to him about the stubborn labeling of many of Sibelius's miniatures as salon music, regardless of the actual quality of a particular piece. My father replied: 'Of course this is salon music, you cannot possible play it outside in the rain, can you?'

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[1] Originally in Swedish 'pinostycken'.

[2] Goss 1996, p. 323.

[3] Here: three independent sonatinas, not eight movements. However, Ron Weidberg's hypothesis that the three sonatinas form an integrated 'hyper-sonata' is attractive, and it also makes sense in performance.

[4] Only *Valse lyrique*, Op. 96a, and *Valse chevaleresque*, Op. 96c, are original piano pieces.

[5] The most extensive opus consisting of ten songs for mixed choir, Op. 23, is missing here because it is derived from the unified University Cantata 1897, JS 106. Hence, these pieces are not included in my tabulation of miniatures.

[6] It may be necessary here to stress that the serenades each are quite substantial pieces, and not counted as miniatures.

[7] However, because Goss's work list is chronological, it was probably more convenient to regard *Canzonetta* Op. 62a (1906, rev. 1911) and *Valse romantique* Op. 62b (1911) as two different compositions. This only proves the difficulty of trying to find truly definite solutions to these matters.

[8] Kilpeläinen 1991: *The Jean Sibelius Musical Manuscripts at Helsinki University Library*.

[9] Dahlström 2003: *Jean Sibelius: Thematisch-bibliographisches Verzeichnis seiner Werke*. See especially the systematic work lists by genres on pages 662–673.

[10] However, the arrangement for string orchestra (ca. 1938), JS 34b, enjoys an overwhelming popularity in Finland, not the least as a pedagogical piece in music schools.

[11] Both versions are original.

[12] Dahlström 2005, p. 212. The Swedish original text: 'Assessorer angående den gåniga Romansen. Måhända är den för traditionell?'

[13] According to the original German text in Richard Strauss's diary: '...seine Musik hat die Frische einer fast unerschöpfenden Erfindung.' Quoted from Tawaststjerna (1976), p. 241. Tawaststjerna 1994, Vol. 2, p. 159, 248; Tawaststjerna 1996, Vol. 4, p. 75; this statement comes from Strauss's diary, ca. April–June 1901, located in the Strauss Family Archives, Garmisch.

[14] For example, Hannele Angervo-Segerstam once said to me that the set of Op. 115 is her favourite among the original pieces for violin and piano by Sibelius.

[15] Murtomäki 2004, p. 149.

[16] Murtomäki 2000, pp. 73–87.

[17] Murtomäki 2004, p. 140.

Folke Gräsbeck

Folke Gräsbeck is one of the main performers of the complete SIBELIUS EDITION, a collection of 68 CDs recorded by the Swedish company BIS Records. His 24 discs in this series were made during an intense period of recording during 1996–2010, and his discs comprise Sibelius's complete piano solo works on 10 CDs, the piano quintet, the piano quartets, the piano trios, songs, separate pieces for violin or cello and piano, etc. The discs for solo piano were praised by Richard A. Kaplan in *Fanfare*: “Gräsbeck makes a most persuasive case for just about all of this music, and Sibelius's output for solo piano will likely never again be recorded as comprehensively or as well.” Folke Gräsbeck studied the piano at the Turku Conservatory (Tarmo Huovinen) and London (Maria Curcio-Diamand, privately). He has worked at the Sibelius Academy since 1985, and became a Master of Music there in 1997. He held his doctoral disputation in 2008 on the topic *The Piano in Sibelius's Youth Production*. He has performed more than thirty piano concertos, for example Shostakovich's Piano Concerto No. 2 as a soloist with the Lebanon Philharmonic Orchestra in 2014. He has given performances as a recitalist and chamber player in many European countries, Japan, Egypt, Israel, UAE, Lebanon, Botswana, Zimbabwe, USA and Mexico.

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