FROM ORIGINAL DXD MASTER
2x HD MASTERING
HELSINKI PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
JOHN STORGÅRDS
LEEVI MADETOJA
SYMPHONY NO. 2
KULLERVO · ELEGY
ONDINE

Leevi Madetoja (1887–1947)
Symphony No. 2 / Kullervo / Elegy

1.	Kullervo, Symphonic Poem, Op. 15	14:13
	Symphony No. 2, Op. 35	
2.	I. Allegro moderato –	13:23
	II. Andante	13:36
	III. Allegro non troppo –	9:39
	IV. Andantino	4:53
3.	Elegy, Op. 4/1 (First movement from the Symphonic Suite, Op. 4)	5:53

LEEVI MADETOJA
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Leevi Madetoja

Composing the Second Symphony in Oulunsalo in summer 1918.
Toista sinfoniaa kirjoittamassa Oulunsalossa kesällä 1918

To be an orchestral composer in Finland as a contemporary of Sibelius and nevertheless create an independent composer profile was no mean feat, but Leevi Madetoja managed it. Though even he was not completely immune to the influence of his great colleague, he did find a voice for himself where the elegiac nature of the landscape and folk songs of his native province of Ostrobothnia merged with a French elegance. Madetoja's three symphonies did not follow the trail blazed by Sibelius, and another mark of his independence as a composer is that his principal works include two operas, ***Pohjalaisia*** (The Ostrobothnians, 1924) and ***Juha*** (1935), a genre that Sibelius never embraced.

Madetoja emerged as a composer while still a student at the Helsinki Music Institute, when Robert Kajanus conducted his first orchestral work, **elegy** (1909) for strings, in January 1910. The work was favourably received and was given four further performances in Helsinki that spring. It is a melodically charming and harmonically nuanced miniature that betrays the influence of Tchaikovsky in its achingly tender tones. Later, Madetoja incorporated ***Elegia*** into his four-movement ***Sinfoninen sarja*** (Symphonic Suite, 1910), but even so it is better known as a separate number.

Sinfoninen sarja was featured at Madetoja's first composition concert, held in Helsinki in September 1910 to great critical acclaim. The critic in ***Nya Pressen*** sketched the artistic profile of the budding composer: "The music of Leevi Madetoja gives a healthy

and lucid impression on the very first hearing. It seems to flow effortlessly of itself, avoiding effects for their own sake, yet it is endlessly fascinating in its thematic structure and its rhythmic and harmonic aspects."

Although Madetoja had strong ties to the National Romantic movement and the powerful emergence of the Finnish arts, his relationship to the national epic, the *Kalevala*, remained somewhat distant. Certainly it never became a central feature of his creative work as it did for Sibelius; in fact, it may well be that Sibelius's influence prevented this from happening. Madetoja's output contains only one orchestral piece based on a *Kalevala* topic, the tone poem **Kullervo** (1913), besides a handful of vocal works setting lines from the epic.

As the name states, Madetoja's *Kullervo* is a portrait of the tragic hero of the *Kalevala* also featured by Sibelius in his breakthrough work, the *Kullervo Symphony*, in the early 1890s. However, Sibelius's work could not have served as a model or even as a challenge for Madetoja, as Sibelius had banned the work from further public performance. He had similarly banned two of his *Lemminkäinen* tone poems. In the early years of the 20th century, therefore, Madetoja could only have been acquainted with a handful of Sibelius's *Kalevala*-based works – *The Swan of Tuonela, Lemminkäinen's return* and *Pohjola's Daughter* – which would certainly have posed a qualitatively if not quantitatively formidable act to follow.

Despite its national topic, Madetoja's *Kullervo* is not specifically Finnish in its expression, and as in *Elegia*, the principal discernible influence behind it is that of Tchaikovsky. Rather than narrating the tale of the hero in strict detail in its music, the work paints an image of its hero with tragedy and pathos. Its key feature is a defiant horn motif presented over a string tremolo and recurring several times along the way. The brass in general are a driving force in the music. In addition to the key motif, there are a

number of shorter fragments that build up into a tumultuous and tense texture with only a moment's respite in a more lyrical and tranquil section. As with Nielsen or Mahler, the work concludes in a different key (E minor) from that in which it began (B minor).

Madetoja's three symphonies form the solid core of his orchestral output. He made his symphonic début in February 1916 with a well-received performance of his ***First Symphony***. He began work on his **Second Symphony** soon after the first, initially hoping to finish it for the spring season in 1917 but ultimately only completing it late in 1918, just before the première in Helsinki in December. The new symphony was received with high acclaim, and it finally established Madetoja firmly at the forefront of Finnish music; it was generally agreed that it was the most significant piece of music to have been written in Finland since the symphonies of Sibelius.

The genesis of the ***Second Symphony*** coincided with the tragedy of the Finnish Civil War in spring 1918. Although Madetoja was not himself involved in the fighting, he was personally deeply affected by the war: his brother Yrjö was killed in action, and he was very upset by the death of his close colleague Toivo Kuula in a shooting incident after the ceasing of hostilities. Indeed, Madetoja's ***Second Symphony*** is the most significant musical document of the Civil War, not as a consciously programmatic depiction of war but as a musical work deeply scarred by the experience.

In terms of the depth of its expression and its scale, the ***Second Symphony*** represented a significant step forward from its predecessor. It is the most grandiose and dramatic of Madetoja's three symphonies and perhaps because of this the most popular of them. From the lyrical though at times sombre mood of the first two movements, it progresses to catastrophe in the third movement and a resigned epilogue in the fourth, darkening the opening E flat major into E minor. Symphonic coherence operates on several levels in the work. The movements are linked by a core motif of narrow compass; the first

two and last two movements are played without a break; and the second and third movements share certain thematic connections.

The first movement reveals Madetoja's exquisite, multi-layered orchestral technique, with motifs and subjects dovetailing almost imperceptibly in counterpoint. The rhythms are also typically diverse. Here, Madetoja usually divides the 6/4 metre into two beats (3+3) but sometimes into three (2+2+2) or four (1.5+1.5+1.5+1.5), superimposing these subdivisions in polyrhythmic textures. In the second movement, which follows without a break, Madetoja introduces a spatial element, with pastoral tones from an oboe and a horn offstage (***in distanza***) – a Finnish variation on the Mahlerian nature idyll.

While in both the first and second movements the music escalates from a lyrical mood to a grand culmination, the real focus of the symphony is in the third movement, combining features of a scherzo and a finale. Here, right from the outset Madetoja rolls out the most powerful and dramatic music he ever wrote. It is in this at times violent movement that the influence of the Civil War is the most palpable, not least in the two martial sections the latter of which leads to the dramatic high point of the entire work. From here, the music subsides into a resigned and austere epilogue. Madetoja himself summarised this touching conclusion thus: "I have fought my battle and retreat to the sidelines."

Kimmo Korhonen

Translation: Jaakko Mäntyjärvi

Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra

The oldest professional symphony orchestra in the Nordic countries was founded as the Helsinki Orchestral Society by the young Robert Kajanus, its first Chief Conductor, in 1882. Well known today for its tradition of performing Sibelius, the **Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra** gave the first performances of many of Sibelius's major works, often with the composer himself conducting. The orchestra undertook its first foreign tour to the Universal Exposition in Paris in 1900 and since then has visited most European countries, in addition to visiting the USA, South America, Japan, and China.

Since 2008, John Storgårds has been the orchestra's Chief Conductor, succeeding Leif Segerstam who received the title of Emeritus Chief Conductor. The list of previous chief conductors also includes Paavo Berglund and Okko Kamu. A new era started in August 2011, when the orchestra moved its permanent residency from the Finlandia Hall to the new Helsinki Music Centre.

The Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and Ondine have maintained a long-standing exclusive partnership involving for example an edition of the complete Sibelius symphonies under the direction of Leif Segerstam, as well as numerous recordings of works by Einojuhani Rautavaara.

www.helsinkiphilharmonicorchestra.fi

2xHD ONDINE

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John Storgårds

Photo: Heikki Tuuli

John Storgårds is one of Finland's exceptional artists who have taken the classical music world by storm in recent decades. He has a dual career as a conductor and violin virtuoso and is widely recognised for his creative flair for programming and his commitment to contemporary music. Since 2008, Storgårds has been Chief Conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. He additionally holds the titles of Artistic Director of the Chamber Orchestra of Lapland since 1996 and Principal Guest Conductor of BBC Philharmonic Orchestra since 2012.

Storgårds appears with such orchestras as BBC Symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony, Swedish Radio Symphony, Oslo Philharmonic, Danish National Symphony, Bamberger Symphoniker, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Netherlands Radio, and Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI Torino. Further afield, Storgårds has conducted the Sydney, Melbourne, and Australian Chamber Orchestras, and the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood Festival. Soloists with whom he regularly collaborates include Gil Shaham, Christian Tetzlaff, Frank Peter Zimmermann, Truls Mørk, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Colin Currie, Håkan Hardenberger, Sabine Meyer, Kari Kriikku, Karita Mattila, and Matti Salminen.

After starting a career as a world-class violinist, John Storgårds returned to the Sibelius Academy from 1993–97 to study conducting with Jorma Panula and Eri Klas. His recordings for Ondine include works by John Corigliano, Hafliði Hallgrímsson, Uuno Klami, Pehr Henrik Nordgren, Andrzej Panufnik, Kaija Saariaho, Jean Sibelius, Jukka Tiensuu, and

Pēteris Vasks (Cannes Classical Disc of the Year Award 2004 for the Violin Concerto 'Distant Light'). In 2002, he received the Finnish State Prize for Music.

www.johnstorgards.com

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THE 2xHD MASTERING PROCESS

This album was mastered using our 2xHD proprietary system. In order to achieve the most accurate reproduction of the original recording we tailor our process specifically for each project, using a selection from our pool of state-of-the-art audiophile components and connectors. The process begins with a transfer to analog from the original DXD master, using cutting edge D/A converters. The analog signal is then sent through a hi-end tube pre-amplifier before being recorded directly in DXD using the MSB Platinum Studio ADC plus. All connections used in the process are made of OCC silver cable.

DSD and 192kHz/24Bit versions are separately generated, directly from the analog signal.

2xHD was created by producer/studio owner André Perry and audiophile sound engineer René Laflamme.

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2xHD Mastering: René Laflamme
2xHD Executive Producer: André Perry

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