

Magnus Lindberg



Magnus Lindberg Photo © Hanya Chlala/ArenaPAL

An introduction to Lindberg's music by Risto Nieminen

Magnus Lindberg wrote his first orchestral score at the age of 17, before taking any lessons in composition. He was curious and not afraid of going his own way. He constructed music with post-Webern serial procedures, as if he was trying to explore the limits of a certain way of making music. Theoretical, extremely complex structures were then defying, and often exceeding, the skills of the human performer.

Yet at the same time Lindberg used to take his music theory lessons early on Saturday mornings, playing the classical repertoire arranged for piano duet with his teacher. Knowing what had been done by the masters before him seemed to urge him to test the boundaries. As his composition teacher Paavo Heininen put it, "if a composer cannot say that he has done something that has not been done before, he cannot say he has done anything at all".

In 1985 came *Kraft*, a study in rhythm and sound. It was the young Lindberg's Rite of Spring. The basic structure and processes were calculated using an elaborate software program, but the focus was already different. Now it looked like Lindberg was challenging the possibilities of musical sound, using scapyard objets trouvés as instruments along with traditional classical sounds. Music burst out with raw, unrefined noise and primitive energy, as in the performances of punk bands that he had heard in Berlin clubs. "Only the extreme is interesting" he declared.

"The orchestra is my favourite instrument" stated Lindberg, confirming something that is clear already by looking at his worklist. *Aura* from 1994 is another revealing piece of the jigsaw puzzle that is, one day, to reveal the full picture of Magnus Lindberg, the composer. Spiritual heir of Sibelius, Lindberg the iconoclast shows that he, too, is able and willing to embrace symphonic thinking.

Technically the music of Magnus Lindberg is based on a solid construction of harmony and rhythm. He often deploys a chaconne technique, where the

musical narrative is built over a repeated harmonic sequence. Despite this the music does not sound theoretical, due to the juicy soundworld, teeming with life. There is a clear sense of dramaturgy as if the musical characters were protagonists in an abstract drama.

In his most recent works, especially in the concertos for clarinet (2002) and violin (2006), he has also introduced a clear melodic aspect which was not such a primary concern in his earlier output. After some 30 years of composition and 80 works one observes that Magnus Lindberg is still heading, with a characteristic curiosity, towards unknown territories, and yet remaining true to where he started. Instead of constructing post-modern collages of other composers' music, his works are a reflection of a versatile personality which distils music history out of an abundance of sonic information. A true composer's statement in music.

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(Editor of Magnus Lindberg (*Les Cahiers de l'IRCAM*, 1993), Artistic Director of IRCAM (1991-96), Director of Helsinki Festival (1991-))

FULL ORCHESTRA

Cantigas

1998-99

19 min

for orchestra

3(III=picc).2.corA.3(III=Ebcl).bcl(=dbcl).2.dbn-4.4(IV=picc tr).3.1-timp.perc(3):I=vib/tgl/bell tree/Chin.cym/2susp.cym(sm, med/lg)/bongos/BD; II=marimba/spring coil/mark tree/Chin.cym(sm)/2susp.cym(med,lg)/tam-t(med/lg)/4tom-t; III=crot/t.bells/bongos/TD/maracas/tpl.bl/tam-t(lg)/4Thai gongs-harp-pft(=cel)-strings

"...transparent but rich, with newly lucid markers studding every turn of his teeming orchestral textures which nobody else can match for sizzling, melting colours and barely controlled energy."

Financial Times

9790060112836 Study Score - Hawkes Pocket Score 1346

World Premiere: 01 Apr 1999

Cleveland, United States

Cleveland Orchestra

Conductor: Christoph von Dohnanyi

Chorale

2001-02

8 min

for orchestra (based on the Bach chorale 'Est ist genug')

2.2.corA.3.2(II=dbn)-4.3.3.1-strings

World Premiere: 05 Feb 2002

De Montfort Hall, Leicester, United Kingdom

Philharmonia Orchestra

Conductor: Esa-Pekka Salonen

Concerto for Orchestra

2002-03

28 min

for orchestra

3(III=af, picc).3(III=corA).4(III=Ebcl,IV=bcl).3(III=dbn)-4.4(IV=tpt in D).3.1-timp.perc(3):vib/bongos/BD/log dr/crot(lower 8ve)/spring coil/Chin.cym/susp.cym/marimba/bell tree/t.bells/sizzle.cym/tam-t/tom-t/wdbl/glsp/tgl/mark tree/tpl.bl/claves/metal plates/Thai gongs/tamburo basco-pft(=cel)-hp-strings

"Lindberg, in his mid-forties, has come of age: this is a piece on another level with extraordinary confidence, boldness of gesture and an architectural logic that makes it immediately familiar...Palpable was the enjoyment of the players (and the audience) for this 30-minute work."

The Independent

World Premiere: 30 Sep 2003

Barbican, London, United Kingdom

BBC Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Jukka-Pekka Saraste

EXPO

2009

9 min

for orchestra

2.picc.2.corA.2.bcl.2.dbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(2):whip/tamburo basco/BD/2susp.cym(med,lg)/tgl/wdbl/TD/cyms/tam-t(lg)-harp-strings

World Premiere: 16 Sep 2009

Avery Fisher Hall, New York, NY, USA

New York Philharmonic

Conductor: Alan Gilbert

Feria

1997

17 min

for orchestra

2.picc.2.corA.3.bcl.2.dbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(2):vib/Chin.cym/2susp.
cym/bongos/BD/bell-tree/tgl/tam-t(med)/marimba/tam-t(lg)/crot/
mark tree/spring coil/Chin.cym(lg)/2susp.cym(med,lg)/4tom-t-
harp-pft(=cel)-strings

"Feria's tight trumpet fanfares burst in with all the fiesta energy of its Spanish title..."

The Times

"Lindberg's orchestration is a marvel; busy, highly coloured, but always clear. He freezes time with sustained harmonies that harbour all kinds of micro-activity."

Daily Telegraph

9790060107962 Study Score - Hawkes Pocket Score 1330

World Premiere: 11 Aug 1997

Royal Albert Hall, London, United Kingdom

Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Jukka-Pekka Saraste

Fresco

1997

22 min

for orchestra

2.picc(=af).2.corA.3(III=Ebcl).bcl.2.dbn-4.4.4.1-perc(3):l=vib/metal
plates/glsp/tam-t(med/lg)/
2susp.cym(sm,med)/sizzle cym/bongos/SD; II=marimba/spring
coil/tgl/BD/Chin.cym/bongos/gongs; III=crot/mark tree/tgl/t.bells/tam-t(v.lg)/Thai
gongs/2susp.cym(med,lg)/very sm.cym/4tom-t/
tpl.bl/2wdbl-pft(=cel)-harp-strings

"Fresco is alive with energy and vision... Lindberg uses the orchestra as if it were one massive instrument full of ever-changing textures."

Los Angeles Times

9790060112508 Study Score - Hawkes Pocket Score 1342

World Premiere: 12 Mar 1998

Los Angeles, California, United States

Los Angeles Philharmonic

Conductor: Esa-Pekka Salonen

FULL ORCHESTRA 3

Parada

2001

13 min

for orchestra

2(II=picc).2.corA.2.bcl.2(II=dbn)-4.2(II=picc tr).3.1-timp.perc(2):l=vib/glsp/bell
tree/tgl/spring coil/
med Chin.cym/2susp.cym(sm,med)/tam-t(med)/bongos/BD; II=marimba/crot/mark
tree/lg Chin.cym/2susp.cym(med,lg)/4tom-t/lg tam-t-harp-pft(=cel)-strings

"Parada's gorgeous opening sequence of string-dominated chords launched a superbly controlled and paced single-movement structure, at once sombre and bursting with invention."

Sunday Telegraph

World Premiere: 06 Feb 2002

The Anvil, Basingstoke, United Kingdom

Philharmonia Orchestra

Conductor: Esa-Pekka Salonen

Purcell Variation

Finale Grande

2002

2 min

for orchestra

3.2.corA.2.bcl.2.dbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(3):tam-t/BD/crot/t.bells/metal plate-strings

World Premiere: 14 Sep 2002

BBC Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Leonard Slatkin

FULL ORCHESTRA 3

Sculpture

2005

23 min

for orchestra

3(III=picc).af1.3.corA.3(III=bcl).bcl.3(III=dbn).dbn-6(V,VI=Wagner tuba).4.4.2-timp.perc(4):2tam-t/4susp.cym/crot/vib/bongos/nipple gong/bell tree/marimba/2Chin.cym/4tom-t/BD/mark tree/tpl.bl/tgl/spring coil/TD-2pft(II=organ) -2harp-strings(no violins)

"The score is sophisticated yet immediately engrossing... The bouncy fanfare figures are not blatant but more like a filigree. The instrumental texture is often fast-moving and complex. A Sibelius sense of mysterious winds blowing everything around is strong at first...In the middle, Sculpture turns into a miniature concerto for orchestra, focusing on different instrumental sections competing to be the most dazzling. At the end the organ came rumbling in, lingering "Zarathustra"-like in its low register. Tubas and other brass instruments took positions around the hall...The piece climaxes with rousing Stravinskian rhythms. The score's 23 minutes fly by. The performance was spectacular. The orchestral writing is that of a master."

Los Angeles Times

World Premiere: 06 Oct 2005

Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, California, United States

Los Angeles Philharmonic

Conductor: Esa-Pekka Salonen

Seht die Sonne

Behold the Sun

2007

27 min 30 sec

for orchestra

3.picc.af1.3.corA.3.Ebcl.bcl.3.dbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(3):crot/2wdbl/2 pairs of bongos/tamburo basco/BD/4susp.cym/glsp/bell tree/nipple gongs/tgl/mark tree/5tpl.bl/4tom-t-2harps-strings

"...a work that liberally mixes the exquisite colours of the orchestra... and that in its luminescent excess is indeed reminiscent of Schoenberg's Gurrelieder: as a revolving sphere of sound in which opulence follows upon opulence."

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

"Again and again the huge orchestra releases bolts of energy... Lindberg's sun does not smile mildly upon its worshippers. Instead, it fires up the music and lends it a lasting resplendence."

Berliner Morgenpost

"...an extravagant and glittering piece on a grand scale, full of bold gestures and big effects... The second movement ends with a solo cello cadenza so lengthy that it is almost a miniature concerto, a mournful lament full of ethereal harmonics. The third movement is the work's darkest, opening in the lower depths of the bass registers and rising to a howl of anguish before settling into a pensive chorale and slipping unobtrusively into silence."

Financial Times

World Premiere: 25 Aug 2007

Philharmonie, Großer Saal, Berlin, Germany

Berliner Philharmoniker

Conductor: Simon Rattle

FULL ORCHESTRA 4

Tribute

2004

2 min 30 sec

for orchestra

2.picc(=af1).2.corA.2.bcl.2.dbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(3):crot/vib/marimba/tpl.bl/tam-t/nipple gong/BD-pft(=cel)-harp-strings

World Premiere: 26 Nov 2004

Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Los Angeles Philharmonic

Conductor: Alexander Mickelthwate

FULL ORCHESTRA 4

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Counter Phrases

2002-03 6 min

for chamber ensemble

1.1.1.1-1.1.1.1.0-perc(2):vib/tgl/mark
tree/3Chin.cym(2hi,med)/4susp.cym(2hi,2med)/bongos/BD/tam-t/
marimba/crot(lower 8ve)/glsp-2pft-strings(1.1.1.1.1)

World Premiere: 13 Mar 2003

Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels, Belgium
Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, choreographer; Ictus Ensemble and Rosas Dance
Company

Jubilees

2002 15 min

for chamber orchestra or ensemble

1(=picc),1.1.1(=dbn)-2.1(in C).1.0-perc(2):vib/BD/mark
tree/marimba/glsp/2susp.cym/tam-t-harp-strings(min:1.1.1.1.1)

World Premiere: 07 Apr 2003

Cite de la Musique, Paris, France
Ensemble InterContemporain
Conductor: Jonathan Nott

SOLO INSTRUMENT(S) AND ORCHESTRA

Campana in Aria

(Bell in the Air)

1998

11 min

for horn and orchestra

2(II=picc).2.2.2-2.2.2.0-perc(1):glsp/2susp.cym(med,lg)/2tam-t(med,lg)/5tpl.bl-harp-cel-strings

World Premiere: 06 Jun 1998

Vara Matinee, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Hans Dullaert (hn); Radio Filharmonisch Orkest Holland

Conductor: Esa-Pekka Salonen

Cello Concerto

1997-99

25 min

for cello and orchestra

2(II=picc).2.corA.2.bcl.2(II=dbn)-2.2.2.1-timp.perc(2):l=vib/crot/tgl/
Chin.cym/2susp.cym(sm,med/ig)/tpl.bl/BD/bongos/Thai gong in D;
II=marimba/glsp/mark tree/2susp.cym(med,lg)/tam-t(lg)/4tom-t/maracas/2wdbl/
Thai gong in F#-harp-cel-strings(8.8.6.4.4)

"The writing is homogeneous, virtuosic, energetic, with the cello up near the bridge almost without interruption in a highly taut style which travels at a quickstep through all the possibilities of the instrument."

Diapason

9790060116612 **Study Score - Hawkes Pocket Score 1388**

World Premiere: 06 May 1999

Cite de la Musique, Paris, France

Anssi Karttunen, cello; Orchestre de Paris

Conductor: Esa-Pekka Salonen

Clarinet Concerto

2001-02

28 min

for clarinet and orchestra

2(II=picc).2.corA.2.bcl.2(II=dbn)-4.3(III=picc.tr).3.1-timp.perc(2):l=vib/glsp/mark
tree/tgl/sm.Chin.cym/
2susp.cym(sm,med/ig)/tam-t(med)/tpl.bl/bongos/BD/thai gong in E; II=marimba/crot/bell
tree/
med Chin.cym/2susp.cym(med,lg)/tam-t(lg)/Thai gong in F-harp-pft(=cel)-strings

"Magnus Lindberg's Clarinet Concerto has enjoyed phenomenal success since its 2002 premiere, and rightly so. A marvellous vehicle for the amazing virtuosity of clarinetist Kari Kriikku...indubitably contemporary in language yet sensuously easy (tuneful, even) on the ear."
BBC Music Magazine

"A perfect concerto, perfectly performed ...if there's any justice it will soon be as oft-performed as Mozart's concerto."

The Times

9790060116773 **Study Score - Hawkes Pocket Score 1386**

World Premiere: 14 Sep 2002

Finlandia Hall, Helsinki, Finland

Kari Kriikku, clarinet; Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Jukka-Pekka Saraste

Violin Concerto

2006

27 min

for violin and orchestra

0.2.0.2-2.0.0.0-strings(min: 4.4.4.4.2)

"This thrilling new addition to the violin repertoire... [is] held together tightly by transformations of the simplest material. And, as it grows and expands, the music becomes charged with a Sibelius-like sense of radiating light and excited affirmation... A complex showpiece that scorches its way on to the platform."

The Times

"...a wonderful new work by Lindberg, who shows that it is possible to wed lyricism and virtuosic display with bracingly fresh sounds and musical ideas of substance."

Boston Globe

World Premiere: 22 Aug 2006

Avery Fisher Hall, New York, NY, United States

Lisa Batiashvili, violin; Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra

Conductor: Louis Langree

CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA

GRAFFITI

2008-09

32 min 30 sec

for chorus and orchestra

Text: Ancient Roman Graffiti (L)

SATB chorus recommended strength 12.12.12.12; minimum 6.6.6.6
2(II=picc).2.2.bcl.2(II=dbn)-2.2.2.1-timp.perc(2):vib/2susp.cym(med,lg)/glsp/spring
coil/tamburo basco/nipple gongs(A,D,E)/marimba/tam-t(lg)/2Chinese
cym(med/sm,med)/crot/tgl/tpl.bl/bongos/SD/TD/BD-harp-pft-strings(12.10.8.8.6)

World Premiere: 20 May 2009

Finlandia Hall, Helsinki, Finland

Helsinki Chamber Choir / Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Sakari Oramo

ENSEMBLE AND CHAMBER WITHOUT VOICE(S)

Bubo bubo

2002 4 min

for ensemble

2(II=picc).2.2.1(=dbn)-2.1.1.0-perc(2):vib/marimba/tam-t/low gong in
Ab/2susp.cym/crot/
4tom-t/bongos-2pft-strings(1.1.1.1.1)

World Premiere: 12 Jun 2002

Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, United Kingdom
London Sinfonietta
Conductor: George Benjamin

Gran Duo

1999-2000 20 min

for woodwind and brass

3(III=picc).2.corA.3.bcl.2.dbn-4.3(III=picc.tr).3.1

"Lindberg, a master of orchestral sound, has chosen virtually the same forces as Stravinsky in his Symphonies of Wind Instruments, and with its five connected movements Gran Duo is a symphony in the modern sense... a darkly brooding yet peaceful work that reflects something of a unique landscape."

The Times

9790060116629 **Study Score - Hawkes Pocket Score 1354**

World Premiere: 08 Mar 2000

Royal Festival Hall, London, United Kingdom
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
Conductor: Simon Rattle

Jubilees

2002 15 min

for chamber orchestra or ensemble

1(=picc).1.1.1(=dbn)-2.1(in C).1.0-perc(2):vib/BD/mark
tree/marimba/glsp/2susp.cym/tam-t-harp-strings(min:1.1.1.1.1)

World Premiere: 07 Apr 2003

Cite de la Musique, Paris, France
Ensemble InterContemporain
Conductor: Jonathan Nott

Otoni

2005 13 min

for brass ensemble

Brass: 4.4(IV=tpt in D).3.1

"...full of brilliant eruptions and mellow lyricism."

Chicago Sun-Times

World Premiere: 16 Feb 2005

Harris Hall, Chicago, IL, USA
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Conductor: Cliff Colnot

Trio

2008 12 min

for clarinet, cello and piano

The first movement - 'Ljud stort, ljud' - may be performed separately

World Premiere: 10 May 2008

Finlandia Hall, Helsinki, Finland
Christoffer Sudqvist (clarinet), Tomas Djupsjöbacka (cello), Heini Kärkkäinen (piano)

PIANO(S)

Etude I

2001

3 min

for solo piano

World Premiere: 19 Oct 2001

Le Havre, Theatre de l'Hotel de Ville, Normandy, France
Jay Gottlieb, piano;

Etude II

2004

4 min

for solo piano

World Premiere: 17 May 2004

Wigmore Hall, London, United Kingdom
Paul Crossley, piano;

Piano Jubilees

2000

15 min

for solo piano

9790060836817 **Piano**

9790060113413 **Piano**

World premiere incomplete: 26 Mar 2000

South Bank Centre, London, United Kingdom
Rolf Hind, piano;

INSTRUMENTAL

Konzertstück

2006

15 min

for cello and piano

World Premiere: 30 Jul 2006

St. Francis, Santa Fe, NM, United States

Magnus Lindberg, piano / Anssi Karttunen, cello;

Mano a mano

2004

15 min

for solo guitar

World Premiere: 16 Aug 2004

Turku Academy Hall, Turku, Finland

Timo Korhonen, guitar;

Partia

2001

25 min

for solo cello

9790060113772 **Cello**

9790060116780 **Cello**

World Premiere: 07 Mar 2002

Finlandia Hall, Helsinki, Finland

Anssi Karttunen, cello;
