

Jean Sibelius

Diego Schissi

SIBELIUS PIANO TRIO

Petteri Iivonen • Juho Pohjonen • Samuli Peltanen

Lotta Wennäkoski

David S. Lefkowitz

Kaija Saariaho



Ann Mulally, executive producer

Volume I

Diego Schissi		
1-4	Nene	16:01
	I Jumping on the walls, <i>Energico</i>	4:11
	II Dozing on a hanger, <i>Onirico, ritmico ma non preciso</i>	3:52
	III Riding a mosquito, <i>Scherzando</i>	3:18
	IV Oozing away, <i>Con brio, nervoso / Calmo, rubato</i>	4:42
David S. Lefkowitz		
5	Ruminations	11:42
Jean Sibelius		
6-8	Korppoo Trio in D Major (JS 209)	26:22
	I <i>Allegro moderato</i>	8:01
	II <i>Fantasia andante</i>	12:02
	III <i>Finale vivace</i>	6:19

Volume II

Jean Sibelius		
1-4	Havträsk Trio in A Minor (JS 207)	19:34
	I <i>Allegro maestoso</i>	6:03
	II <i>Andantino</i>	4:07
	III <i>Scherzo</i>	2:27
	IV <i>Rondo</i>	6:59
Lotta Wennäkoski		
5	Päärme	11:12
Kaija Saariaho		
6-10	Je sens un deuxième cœur	17:15
	I <i>Je dévoile ma peau</i>	4:01
	II <i>Ouvre-moi, vite</i>	2:08
	III <i>Dans le rêve, elle l'attendait</i>	3:38
	IV <i>Il faut que j'entre</i>	2:16
	V <i>Je sens un deuxième cœur qui bat tout près du mien</i>	5:13
Jean Sibelius		
11-13	Lovisa Trio in C Major (JS 208)	13:21
	I <i>Allegro</i>	4:51
	II <i>Andante</i>	3:44
	III <i>Allegro con brio</i>	4:48



CONSULATE GENERAL OF FINLAND
LOS ANGELES

Introducing **Sibelius Piano Trio**

by J.P. Markkanen, Consul General of Finland

The country of Finland and the state of California celebrate many things in common, especially the rich musical culture of both places. I proudly represent the Finnish government and have had the privilege of serving as The Consul General of Finland in Los Angeles. My wife Tuula and I have loved our time in Los Angeles. Perhaps typically for Finns, my wife and I share a passion for great classical music, and we have felt at home in Los Angeles, where so much of the world's greatest classical music is performed, composed and relished by our friends in the sunny state.

It was therefore no surprise to me when three Finnish national treasures, violinist **Petteri Iivonen**, pianist **Juho Pohjonen** and cellist **Samuli Peltanen** asked Los Angeles-based Yarlung Records if the label would be willing to create their debut album as Sibelius Piano Trio.



Juho Pohjonen, piano; Petteri Iivonen, violin; Samuli Peltanen, cello

Petteri, Juho and Samuli founded Sibelius Piano Trio a few years ago, and catapulted to success on the European concert stage. When three international soloists of this caliber unite to form a chamber music ensemble, the results are predictably electric. These three friends love playing together, and this love is easy to hear in their concerts and in their recording.

Petteri lived in Los Angeles for several years while studying with Hagai Shaham at Thornton School of Music at USC, and he has close family here. Yarlung had worked with Petteri to record his now legendary albums *Art of the Violin* and *Art of the Sonata* with Canadian

pianist Kevin Fitz-Gerald, released on CD and on vinyl.

Juho has performed often in Los Angeles, once with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, three times with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and once in our home for a LACO event which we very much enjoyed.

Sibelius Piano Trio's March, 2016 Segerstrom Center for the Arts concert marked Samuli's concert debut in the United States. We are eager for his return.

Sibelius Piano Trio and Yarlung Records dedicated this album to Finland's 100th Anniversary. I want to say a personal thank you to **Executive Producer Ann Mulally**, a friend who serves on the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra board of directors, and to **Randy and Linda Bellous** for enabling Yarlung to create this double album in honor of Finland's centennial.

As you will hear when you enjoy Sibelius Piano Trio, either in live concert or on this recording, these gentlemen are at home in any musical style. When they play *Nene*, written for them by Argentine composer Diego Schissi, you hear Latin musicians offering you South American sunlight and Argentine dance rhythms. When Sibelius Piano Trio performs *Ruminations* by David S. Lefkowitz, the Trio conjurs Persian poetry, musical instruments including the oud, nose flute and the Eastern European Klezmer. Petteri, Juho and Samuli perform these works from the other side of the world from where they were born as fluently and seemingly effortlessly as they play celebrated Sibelius trios or modern classics by Finnish composer virtuosos Lotta Wennäkoski and Kaija Saariaho.

Coretet (yarlungartists.org/coretet) is the organization which commissioned *Nene* and *Ruminations* for Sibelius Piano Trio. My sincere thanks. Join them as fellow commissioners of new music. *Ruminations* and *Nene* were audience favorites at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, where the Trio gave their premieres on March 30th, 2016.

Lotta Wennäkoski's *Päärme* was commissioned by Finland's Kimito Island Music Festival for Sibelius Piano Trio, which premiered the work last summer, on July 7th, 2015. Samuli Peltonen returned to perform in the festival again in 2016.

The Trio's performance of Kaija Saariaho's well-known dark and yet transcendent *Je sens un deuxième cœur*, about a pregnant woman who is attacked and survives, may become known as the authoritative performance of this mighty work.

And in honor of the Trio's namesake, Petteri, Juho and Samuli perform three early piano trios by "the master," Jean Sibelius himself. They begin with the unpublished *Korppoo Trio*, a real treat. Sibelius wrote this work in 1887, but the score is closely held by The Sibelius Foundation, which gives infrequent permission for public performance or recordings of this monumental score. Sibelius Piano Trio had the special honor of performing from the manuscript written cleanly in the composer's hand. This live concert on March 30th offered the lucky audience the first main stage performance of this work in the Americas. May there soon be another!

Disk two opens with the better-known *Havträsk Trio*, which Sibelius wrote in 1886, one year before *Korppoo Trio*. Our musicians help us recover from the challenging Saariaho trio with

Sibelius' light-hearted *Lovisa Trio*, which follows. Sibelius wrote *Lovisa* in 1888.

As a proud Finn and as a representative of the Finnish government, I salute Sibelius Piano Trio for their talent and join them in celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Finland's independence in 2017. Petteri, Juho and Samuli embody and exemplify the best of our country, and as someone who lives in Los Angeles, it gives me great pleasure that the Trio is so intimately connected with California and Yarlung Records. Please join me in celebrating this dynamic young trio, and in celebrating the magnificent country of Finland. *Suomi 100!*



--J.P. Markkanen, Consul General of Finland
Los Angeles, July 28th, 2016

Thoughts on Sibelius' *Havträsk Trio*, *Korppoo Trio* and *Lovisa Trio*

by Juho Pohjonen

Jean Sibelius' piano trios were important to him personally. He wrote them in his youth, during the summers he spent vacationing with his brothers and sisters on various islands in Houtskär, the Finnish archipelago off the southwest coast of Finland. Sibelius loved these islands, and the three trios we include in this recording were eventually named after two of his favorite islands, as well as the coastal town of Lovisa, where his Aunt Evelina had a house.¹ Given their natural talents, the young Sibelius siblings formed a trio. Janne² played the violin, his sister Linda played the piano, and his brother Christian played the cello. Given the family musicians at hand, it was natural for Sibelius to write piano trios for their mutual enjoyment.

The young Sibelius wrote his *Havträsk* Trio in A Minor (JS 207) during the summer of 1886, during his first vacation after beginning his studies in music composition. It feels like we hear everything Sibelius learned in class, experimenting as he was, but now not under his teacher's watchful eye! Movement one begins bombastically, balanced by the three lighter movements which follow. The *Andantino* second movement gives voice to some of Sibelius' most beautiful melodies, followed by the whimsical and virtuosic *Scherzo* third movement which reminds me a little of Mendelssohn. Sibelius finished the piece with a simple melody which culminates into a surprisingly passionate dance.

¹ The town of Lovisa (alternately spelled "Loviisa," lies east of Helsinki on the Gulf of Finland.

² Janne was Jean Sibelius' childhood nickname. "Janne" is short for Johan, and Jean Sibelius' full name in Finnish was Johan Julius Christian Sibelius.



Only one summer later in 1887, Sibelius gave us his monumental *Korppoo* Trio in D Major (JS 209) with which we end our first volume on this recording. We can hear the magnificent mature Sibelius peeking out through this work. Sibelius wrote *Korppoo Trio* in three sophisticated and dramatic movements, impressive indeed following so closely on the heels of the trio he wrote on the island of Havträsk a mere twelve months earlier. *Korppoo* opens with a good-humored celebration of the Beauty of Nature and includes a thoughtful Fugue in the development section which demonstrates his growing power as a composer. Next comes a *Fantasia*, improvisational and painterly in nature, with frequent tempo changes and mood swings, ending with passages of natural serenity that remind me of bird song. Sibelius reveals his fun sense of humor in the final *Rondo*, which he writes without allowing himself to be inhibited by the traditions of the “approved” classical tradition.

I think Sibelius’ most-performed piano trio is the one he wrote the following summer of 1888 while staying at his aunt’s home in the town of Lovisa. This bright, energetic and thoroughly happy trio in C Major opens full of youthful optimism. This joyous material develops in intensity and culminates in vivid marching rhythms which anticipate similar moments in many of Sibelius’ later works. The lyrical *Andante* movement and the imposing finale remind me a little of something Edvard Grieg might have written, filtered through Sibelius’ imagination. Many consider the *Lovisa* Trio in C Major (JS 208) to be among Sibelius’ most mature works written during his student years, however *Korppoo Trio* remains unpublished, so is rarely heard. For me, *Lovisa* lacks the melancholy and world-weariness that characterize Sibelius’ later works, and I find *Lovisa* refreshingly life affirming, particularly following Saariaho’s *Je sens un deuxième cœur*. Just a few weeks after Sibelius finished writing *Lovisa*, the trio of

two brothers and their sister disbanded when Linda moved to Tampere to teach mathematics. Sibelius never wrote another piano trio. How fortunate for us that the Sibelius children enjoyed those happy summers together.

--Juho Pohjonen

writing from SummerFest in La Jolla, California, August 10th, 2016



Samuli Peltonen, Juho Pohjonen, and Petteri Iivonen at Segerstrom Center for the Arts

Producer's notes:

Finnish violinist Petteri Iivonen lived in Los Angeles in 2007 and 2008 while studying with Hagai Shaham who was professor of violin at USC's Thornton School of Music. Hagai and his wife Efrat were having dinner with our close friends Adam and Rotem Gilbert, and the four of them talked about Yarlung Records, our interest in new music, our recording techniques, and our mission to support young musicians at the beginnings of their international concert careers.³ My phone rang late that night. It was Hagai, telling me he had a Finnish student I should hear. We set up an audition and a friendship and recording partnership developed swiftly. Petteri remains one of the finest violinists I have ever heard. We became good friends, our families vacationing together, arranging concerts, and plotting all kinds of musical mischief.

Yarlung board member Gary Hollander and his wife Marcia underwrote Petteri's now legendary debut album, *Art of the Violin*, along with the help of Ann Mulally and other close friends and supporters. Two years later, Ann Mulally served as executive producer and underwriter for *Art of the Sonata*,⁴ Petteri's second album, which received even more praise. A vinyl pressing of *Art of the Violin* followed, underwritten by Dr. Art Womack.

³ Adam Gilbert serves as special advisor to Yarlung Artists, our nonprofit, and it is thanks to Adam and Rotem that we have worked with a number of superb musicians, including Swiss 'cellist Frédéric Rosselet, viol master Malachai Bandy, Canadian pianist Kevin Fitz-Gerald, Sophisticated Lady jazz quartet, the Gilberts' own illustrious Ciaramella Ensemble, and Petteri Iivonen.

⁴ Petteri performs solo repertoire by Bach, Ysaÿe, Sallinen and Lefkowitz on both of these albums, and violin sonatas by Debussy, Franck and Brahms with pianist Kevin Fitz-Gerald.

About 18 months ago, Petteri called from Finland and told me he and two friends had formed Sibelius Piano Trio, and that they wanted to make their debut album with Yarlung Records. These three friends happened to be Juho Pohjonen, Petteri Iivonen and Samuli Peltonen, three successful international soloists in their own rights, balancing schedules of concerto performances with orchestra tours and solo recitals. As J.P. Markkanen observes in his introduction, the musical power three performers of this caliber can unleash when they play together is magnetic and palpable. This is not just any fresh young piano trio.



Samuli, Petteri, and Juho

Ann Mulally graciously offered to serve as executive producer and underwriter. We held a private concert on Easter Sunday at the Ostin Music Center at UCLA, followed by our recording sessions and a larger public performance on March 30th, 2016 in Samueli Theater at Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa, to which we invited fellow audiophiles, chamber music enthusiasts, university students and grammar school and high school children. This week marked the main stage world premieres of Argentine composer Diego Schissi's *Nene* and Los Angeles composer David S. Lefkowitz' *Ruminations*, and the North American premieres of Lotta Wennäkoski's *Päärme* and Sibelius' *Korppoo Trio*, written in 1887 and performed from the unpublished manuscript.

The Kimito Island Music Festival commissioned Lotta Wennäkoski's *Päärme*, which received its world premiere by Sibelius Piano Trio during the opening concert festival on July 7th, 2015. It is a romp; I hope you enjoy this piece. Please tighten your seatbelts.

Also in 2015, Yarlung Artists joined forces with Coretet.org, a new music commissioning organization. This album includes Coretet's first two commissions, *Nene*, by Diego Schissi, and *Ruminations* by David S. Lefkowitz. Coretet's third commission, from Caroline Shaw, premiered at SOKA University, in a concert by Calidore String Quartet.

Coretet's executive director Donna Morton and I would like to thank the well-known Commissioning Triumvirate **Raulee Marcus, Stephen A. Block and Leslie Lassiter** for underwriting *Nene*, and **Randy & Linda Bellous, Jess Morton, Leon & Ikee Hasserjian, Stratton-Petit Foundation, Linda Attiyeh, Rinchen Lhamo and Alex Shapiro** for underwriting

Ruminations. Please join us at yarlungartists.org/coretet or write to us at Yarlung Artists Coretet, 10920 Wilshire Boulevard 150-9162, Los Angeles, California 90024 USA and help us commission music from today's finest composers. Your gift enables the creation of great music and makes you part of music history, with your name in the score.

Kaija Saariaho wrote her piano trio *Je sens un deuxième cœur* in 2003. I heard it first in a Green Umbrella concert in Walt Disney Concert Hall in 2005. Its English title would be "I sense a second [beating] heart." Saariaho created this trio while writing her second French opera *Adriana Mater*, a gruesome tale during a modern civil war somewhere, which premiered at Opera Bastille the following year, in April of 2006. The trio is thematically related to her opera, but follows a different story line. In the trio, a pregnant woman is attacked. Fortunately she and her baby survive the attack, and the piece concludes with the mother listening gratefully to the heart beat of her unborn but still surviving baby. It is a violent work that ends more happily than these sorts of pieces often do. We placed the lighthearted *Lovisa Trio* after the Saariaho, to give us and our listeners a chance to recover from the journey. Saariaho wrote *Je sens un deuxième cœur* for viola, cello and piano, so Petteri plays viola in our recording of the work.

Finland's 100th Anniversary of Independence is a celebration we can all enjoy. Finland is a great country, one which has inspired artistic and technological creation and innovation around the world. Petteri, Juho, Samuli and our valiant **Executive Producer Ann Mulally** wanted to dedicate this music to Finland's independence. Joining Ann and our major underwriters are **Randy & Linda Bellous**, (our **Finnish Centennial Sponsors**), who arranged a special gift

enabling us to release two volumes of this glorious music. Six weeks before the release of this recording, Yarlung had the privilege of releasing *James Matheson*, which includes Esa-Pekka Salonen conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Esa-Pekka inspired us to start celebrating Finnish genius and Finland's centennial early.

Petteri, Juho and Samuli join me in offering our thanks to our generous underwriters:

Ann Mulally
Randy & Linda Bellous
Seegerstrom Center for the Arts
Stratton-Petit Foundation
Finlandia Foundation
Aaron Egigian

Westin South Coast Plaza
JP Morgan
Chip & Sharyn Moore
Wells Fargo

Additional thanks to our album sponsors: Gerry Tywoniuk, Joel Marine, Ginny & Michael Gibbs, Leslie & Dan Bigos, David Schectman, Paule Marx, Nancy Mooslin, Peachy Spielberg, Maureen Keesey Fuentes, David & Margie Lee, Sarah Seaver & John Spielberg, Lisa Lang & Jonathan Bush.



And in addition to being a major underwriter, our friend Aaron Egigian graciously hosted us at Segerstrom Center, along with Tom Lane and Ed O'Brien who took excellent care of us in Samueli Theater and helped us feel at home. And thank you to Yarlung patron Michelle Rohe, for giving this glorious New York Steinway (serial number 549654) to Segerstrom Center.

Stereo

We recorded the stereo version of *Sibelius Piano Trio* using Ted Ancona's AKG C-24 stereo microphone with a special new-old-stock RCA 6072 vacuum tube in it supplied and calibrated by David Bock, Yarlung's microphone technician. We chose an Elliot Midwood all vacuum tube microphone preamplifier and fed our signal into our SonoruS ATR12 analog tape recorder using Agfa 468 tape made by EMTEC and into our Merging Technologies Hapi converter recording DSD256 using Pyramix software.

Yarlung designed our interconnects. Power cords for our most sensitive analog equipment were made for us personally by Gary Koh from Genesis Advanced Technologies. Digital components used power cords from Aural Symphonics. Stereo formats were monitored on speakers from Genesis Advanced Technologies. Our SonoruS Holographic Imaging and 5 Channel Surround Sound versions, mentioned below, are available as high resolution downloads. Please visit www.yarlungrecords.com for more information about these formats.

SonoruS Holographic Imaging

We used our main AKG C-24 stereo microphone and added two additional mid-hall Schoeps M222 vacuum tube microphones,⁵ which Yarlung recording engineer Arian Jansen fed into the SonoruS Holographic Imaging processor to create a two channel mix that uses a proprietary matrix incorporating phase, timing and EQ information from the four microphones to reproduce a three-dimensional listening experience from two speakers.⁶ Arian captured this Holographic Imaging version using a second SonoruS ATR12 analog tape recorder using EMTEC 528 broadcast tape which we then converted to PCM and DSD for our various download formats.

5 Channel Surround Sound

NativeDSD mastering engineer Tom Caulfield came from Boston to record 5 Channel Surround Sound using five DPA 4006A microphones. Tom built a carbon fiber array to hold the microphones, which takes inspiration from a standard Decca Tree with three forward microphones and two additional surround microphones about twelve feet to the rear. Tom fed these microphones directly into his Merging Technologies Horus converter to record in 256DSD.

⁵ Our Schoeps microphones also belong to my friend Ted Ancona at Ancona Audio.

⁶ A note on SonoruS Holographic Imaging: with the correct playback setup, this format can fill the room with musical information, with sound coming from up to 270 degrees around the listening position. Holographic Imaging only works for one person in that exact listening position, however, and it only works if every component in the playback chain is phase coherent. My “best” speakers do not image correctly enough to give me the full holographic image. Please don’t be offended if your super-expensive system cannot accurately reproduce the holographic effect. Not all premium audiophile systems are designed to incorporate this degree of phase representation. Please download our Holographic Imaging test tracks first to determine if your system can accurately portray the signal circling around your listening position. If it can, enjoy! If it cannot, I recommend the stereo or surround sound versions of this album which I hope you enjoy very much. The test tracks are available at yarlungrecords.com/sonorus

The limitations and benefits of multiple formats

We believe that the musical intent communicated directly by our musicians is generally superior to a musical arc that I as the producer could create in postproduction, so we don't edit within movements. In this case, however, it was imperative for us to be able to use unedited movements given the number of formats involved (analog tape, DSD, SonoruS Holographic Imaging and 5 Channel Surround Sound). Even though it takes more rehearsal to prepare for a recording like this, Sibelius Piano Trio fine-tuned their repertoire for three weeks in Finland before flying to Southern California. They are a trio dream team; I hope you enjoy the results of their energy and talent.

--Bob Attiyeh, producer

Recording Engineers:

Bob Attiyeh, stereo analog tape and DSD

Tom Caulfield, 5 Channel Surround Sound

Arian Jansen, SonoruS Holographic Imaging

Assistant Producer: Jacob Horowitz

Steinway technician: Kathy Smith

Mastering Engineers: Steve Hoffman & Bob Attiyeh

Executive Producer: Ann Mulally

Layout: Eron Muckleroy

Sibelius Piano Trio, Los Angeles: Cooper Bates Photography

Photos of Lake Kuhmo, Finland: Hagai Shaham

Finnish Centennial Sponsors: Randy & Linda Bellous

in honor of Finland's 100th Anniversary of Independence

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Volume I

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Diego Schissi
- 5 *Ruminations*
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Volume II

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Executive Producer: Ann Mulally

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Ann Mulally

Randy & Linda Bellous

Seegerstrom Center for the Arts

Stratton-Petit Foundation

Finlandia Foundation

Aaron Egigian



Breaking the Sound Barrier

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