

Strong and delicate

A spirituality flows through Halmstad composer Tommie Haglund's music. The Cello Concerto Flaminis Aura relates to Swedenborg, the symphonic poem Hymnen an die Nacht, for violin and orchestra, a connection with the German romantic Novalis poem.

The theme of Novalis is the overcoming of death. Death and night are not the enemies of life and light, but to achieve harmony, it is necessary to see the connection between these worlds.

Haglund has been inspired by the unique visual language and the romantic religiosity in the hymns. The musical material is transformed into a series of episodes that are born and extinguished. The recurrent solo cadenzas are turning against the "collective" orchestra.

The atmosphere of the concerto has some similarity with Alban Berg's lyrical violin concerto. In the long-spun targeted in Berg's concerto, Haglund's poem is more static. At the end resonate songs by John Dowland. The static nature and the slow pace, typical of Haglund, makes the length (39 minutes) feels significant.

The American violinist Elizabeth Pitcairn premiered the concerto in 2005 on her Stradivarius, the Red Violin, with the same forces on the disc: Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra, with Hannu Koivula conducting. She makes a persuasive, empathetic interpretation with an unusually beautiful violin sound. The orchestral part is responsively performed.

To the circuit which sees the importance to spread Haglund's music is among others conductor Joachim Gustafsson, pianist Carl-Axel Dominique, clarinetist Karin Dornbusch, violinist Dan Almgren and soprano Tua Åberg. Here they interpret "Daughter of the Voice" (2003) together with Jeanette Bjurling, soprano, John Ehde, cello, Marie Åström, harp and Mark Leoson, percussion. Strong and sonorously delicate music, superbly performed.

Comfortable light and translucent rings To the Sunset Breeze (in memory of Frederick Delius) with the Lysell Quartet performing with harpist Stephen Fitzpatrick and guitarist John Mills.

Best track; Hymns to the night

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To listen to Tommie Haglund's symphonic poem for violin and orchestra "Hymn to the Night" at dawn after this year's brightest night was not nearly as strange as I first thought. This nocturnal music approaches darkness in a way that has few comparisons. Like a slow dance between the solo part and orchestra, or between the self and the absolution of the self, where the moves are such that you may not know who is leading or who is being led. But there is also towards the end a light or maybe you should call it a clarity that has a dawn in itself. The "Daughter of the voice" for chamber ensemble and two sopranos with words from St. Bridget and the topic of mysticism of pain when Mary sees her son on the cross. But the music is not an abstract spirituality but almost physical in its bodily reactions over the heat of the lyrics. The third piece of this portrait CD, "To the probably most healing poet, Walt Whitman. Music about a cool evening breeze, which ends a densified musical 24 hours with Tommie Haglund.

Best track: "Hymn to the Night"

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