



Interview with Timo-Juhani Kyllönen, the Composer

Evangelist of Goodness

Timo-Juhani Kyllönen is a cosmopolitan Finnish composer, who believes in melody, feeling and humanity; he gets his creative power from God, nature and the original force of cosmic positive energy. While Johann Sebastian Bach has been called the fifth evangelist, Timo Juhani Kyllönen can be called the evangelist of goodness – so decisively he brings out beauty from the chaos of this world and goodness from evil with his music.

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Timo-Juhani Kyllönen reminds more of an inhabitant of the South than a Finn as for his temperament and fastness of speech. With inborn ease he has learned to speak seven languages: Finnish, Swedish, English, German, Russian, Spanish and French, and he understands Italian, too. He could be a professional in many other fields than music. On the basis of his social skills, verbal ability and knowledge of languages he could be an actor, a clergyman or a translator. Many paintings in oil are a sign of the fact that a painter could also have been possible. Timo-Juhani Kyllönen is a multitalented person, for whom composing is a vocation given by God.

Born as a composer

- I was born as a composer, I cannot do anything else. I sometimes wonder how I can have so many gifts, but after all they all have to do with composing, I must know all these languages and have these abilities. When I am composing an opera I must know how it functions on the stage. When I am out in the world at concerts, music festivals or hold lectures I must know languages and meet with different cultures. When I think of my own task in the universe I realize that I have been given all the possibilities to express myself and my thoughts. My task is to reach a great number of different groups of people with my music.

- I have received training for composing, but the basic substance has come as an inborn gift, it cannot be learned. Not everyone can become a composer even though they knew everything about music. If one does not have substance of one's own nothing is conveyed by the music. A composer must have a strong personal voice. After all this is what composing is about.

Phases of life

Childhood in Sweden

Timo-Juhani Kyllönen was born at Saloinen near the city of Raahе on the 1st of December, 1955, but moved to Sweden with his parents

at the age of two. His father, who played the accordion, encouraged the children to play and Timo-Juhani started learning to play the accordion when he was nine years old. As a little boy Timo-Juhani used to walk in the woods and communicate with birds and thus he learned to imitate the birds' singing skillfully.

A composer's nature manifested itself already as a child, he wrote his first composition '*Spring morning*' (waltz) at the age of eleven. The idea of the composition was an interval taken from a bird's song he heard on his way to school, of which he created music. The waltz was published by Charlie Publishers in Sweden. Another childhood composition, *Raahе tango*, in the honour of the home town was written at about the same time. At the age of eleven Timo-Juhani won a talent show in Fagersta, Sweden, and has been performing ever since. He started a dance orchestra of his own at the age of fourteen. The accordion studies were successful because he won prizes in several Swedish contests and was also chosen as the representative of Sweden in the Nordic accordion championship in Oslo, 1972.

Musical influence in the family

Apart from his father, Timo-Juhani has music in his genes from his ancestors. His grandfather, who lived in the area of Raahе was known as a ballad singer, who sang in his rocking chair ballads consisting of even 40-50 verses. His grandmother's father was a village fiddler, who maintained himself as a musician at the beginning of 20th century. On his mother's side of the family there are clergymen and cantors. At the church of Oulainen in 19th century there was a cantor with the name of Johan Friis, and his two sons followed their father's footsteps as cantors e. g. at the church of Haapavesi.

Back to Finland

Timo-Juhani Kyllönen moved to Finland in 1973 and passed his matriculation examination at the Helsinki Andra Svenska Lyceum in 1974. He continued his accordion studies at the Espoo Music College under the instruction of Matti Rantanen. He did his national



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service in the Hämeenlinna military orchestra playing the clarinet. Finnish music life opened for him in 1974-76 when Timo-Juhani Kyllönen was the accompanist in the gypsy ensemble Hortto Kaalo and toured Finland with them in concerts three or four times a week. At the concerts he had his own solo performances and there was also classical music in the repertoire. He accompanied Anneli Sari and Viktor Klimenko and had gigs for television as a studio musician. Good improvising skills and reading notes prima vista opened these opportunities for him. The career of a studio musician was advancing, but he wished to continue with his accordion studies. It was not yet possible to study the accordion at the Sibelius Academy.

As a student in Moscow

The accordion studies were realized with the six-year state grant of the Soviet Union at the Gnesin Institute in Moscow in 1976-82. Music teaching in Moscow was excellent. The internationally known Friedrich Lips was his teacher. Timo-Juhani Kyllönen took Master's degree in music and received the final report from the Gnesin Institute with the diplomas in the accordion playing, orchestral conducting and pedagogics.

The studies in Moscow continued with the additional four years until the year 1986 when the Tchaikovsky Conservatoire admitted Timo-Juhani Kyllönen as a graduate student in composing and granted a four-year scholarship for studies in composing in 1982. The reason for the admittance was that he already then had a very strong personal voice in his music. At the Tchaikovsky Conservatoire Kyllönen's subjects were e.g. composing, orchestration, harmony and counterpoint. Aleksei Nikolajev, Juri Fortunatov and Aleksandr Tsugajev were his teachers.

Graduation and the impressive return to Finland

To celebrate the graduation the Tchaikovsky Conservatoire put on a concert for Timo-Juhani Kyllönen, the first foreign composition stu-

dent on the 10th of April, 1986. The foremost musicians, singers and choirs from Moscow performed at the concert. The premiere of the first symphony op. 8 took place the same year in June when the Novosibirsk filharmonic orchestra performed it under Arnold Katz. The concert was televised in the Soviet Union.

Timo-Juhani Kyllönen composed his first symphony for a large orchestra as the diploma work of his composition studies. The idea for the theme of the symphony was born in the street on a trip in Germany and it is still to be found written in the composer's pocket calendar. The symphony begins with the whole orchestra playing in unisono a rhythm which comes from the syllables of the composer's name Ti-mo-Ju-ha-ni-Kyl-lö-nen. The composer wanted to describe his spiritual character as a human being at first with the tone painting of the whole orchestra. He already found his own tone language when he was a student, it can be heard in the first string quartet op.3, *In Memory of a Friend* from the year 1984, and it was recorded by the String Quartet of the Composers' Union to the Soviet Radio Channel 1.

An impressive return to Finland took place in summer 1986 when the Helsinki Festival put on a concert for Timo-Juhani Kyllönen's works in its series of summer concerts. The concert was held at the Tempelaukio Church. In the autumn of 1986 the composer received the post of a part-time teacher of music theory and chamber music at the Sibelius Academy. He also had composition students and theory teaching in the Department of Musicology at the University of Helsinki. TV1 made the documentaries of Timo-Juhani Kyllönen's music studies in Moscow *Accordion Studies in Moscow* in 1982 and *In Melodics in Moscow* in 1988 and MTV3 made *Born as a composer* in 1997.

Cosmopolitanism

Becoming a cosmopolitan was natural on the basis of the events in the composer's life: 16 years of growing up in Sweden, a couple of years touring Finland with Hortto Kaalo and ten years of studying in Moscow, which

was the melting pot of different nationalities. In the atmosphere of the Tchaikovsky Conservatoire there was old culture, the influence of the composers Tchaikovsky, Hachaturian and many other artists. With the 12 years of marriage to Maritza Núñez from Peru Kyllönen became acquainted with South American culture. Dancing mereng on Saturdays, Afro-Peruvian rhythms and Creole music and on the other hand Slavism and the knowledge of Gypsy music built a multicultural basis for his musical expression. Four trips to Peru and even four months' continuous stay in Lima in 1980 gave a lasting Latin American influence on his spiritual character. In addition to this there was a half-year in Paris, France in 1989 and 1993 getting acquainted with e.g. IRCAM and other institutes of modern music, and there were also innumerable trips to different parts of the world to concerts, music festivals and delivering lectures.

Freelance composing, directing choirs and family life

Timo-Juhani Kyllönen has been a freelance composer for about 20 years. There have been composing orders evenly in the course of years. Composing is his vocation, which takes everything, therefore he has not applied for any post. His everyday life is built on composing, family life and directing choirs. Composing is interrupted once a week by directing a ladies' choir in Kirkkonummen kansalaisopisto (Kirkkonummi open college). Performances and concerts break the routine every now and then.

Timo-Juhani Kyllönen and his wife Catharina have three daughters, who all have music in their genes, they sing well and also play; Aurora plays the cello, Olivia the violin and Sabina began her piano studies at a music institute, she also creates melodies of her own and wants to become a composer. Catharina is a music teacher at high school, she sang for almost 20 years in the chamber choir of the Finnish Radio, which was discontinued in 2004. The whole family makes music, a detached house in Espoo offers a good opportunity for this.

Philosophy of goodness as a starting point to composing

It is said that Finnish composers almost entirely get their inspiration from the Aarre Merikanto-tradition and there is to be perceived a certain inside atmosphere in Finnish music life. To this inner circle there came out of the unknown a young 30-year-old composer, Timo-Juhani Kyllönen in 1986, who had a completely different background and a different, clear and internalized view of creating music.

You create goodness with your music, do you know any other composers who have the same starting point? Is there any other composer who thinks that goodness holds the world together?

- I have not come across that though composers' thoughts are published in magazines. I am myself and alone with this philosophical starting point. Every composer should of course have his/her own view, because philosophical thinking belongs to a composer's work. If you are a composer, you are also a philosopher. You must have philosophy near your heart. When I convey or create tones I reflect my view of the world such as I experience it.

I said 20 years ago that I believe in melody, the power of feeling and goodness. It was worth saying, I had this conviction even then when the dominant view of the music was post-serial and avantgarde in Finland. Nowadays melodiousness is allowed.

How did you get the idea of the triumph of goodness holding the world together?

- For many years I have had this conviction that my task as a composer is to transmit positive cosmic energy. I feel that I am "a transmitter". I believe in God and I believe that there is a higher spiritual being who conveys me the task that has been given to me. My great task is to transmit cosmic positive energy. A few years ago it became clear to me when I thought about the chaos of this world, wars and suffering how this big chaos, the whole world holds together. When I came to Finland 20 years ago and

offered these thoughts in interviews, my idea was that I have to believe in goodness. During the 20 years my view has become even stronger. My task in this universe is to transmit positive energy. I was born here to do that. I am happy to know that this is my task and I have to do it a hundred per cent even though I were peniless. However hard my life would be, I have to believe in goodness and I have to transmit positive energy to people. It is my task.

Is it seen in the fact that you react to great events in the world with your music?

- Yes, you could say so. I named my concert in New York in November, 2001 *A Musical Offering*, because I wanted to remember the victims of September 11th through my compositions.

I composed my string orchestra piece *Dies Irae, op. 74* to commemorate the victims of the tsunami in Asia on Boxing Day 2004.

What is your God like?

- I believe in God's existence. After all nobody can define what God is like. I believe in Indian yoga and philosophy, that there is one God. There is not separately Islamic God, Jehova's witnesses' God or the Mormons's God. It is alien thinking to me. I believe that there is one God, who is the crystallization of goodness. Through this crystallization he gives us rays and cosmic energy. We who have understood the great power of God get a great conviction of it. This composer's task, that I compose and create new music and bring it to people of all ages, children, adults and old people, is my way to manifest God's goodness. All goodness is concentrated in God. I have no need to define what he looks like.

- God is an enormous power. I have always experienced that I get power from following the spiritual Path. All my life I have tried to get forward in my own spiritual Path, I try to reach the next level of consciousness. I believe that consciousness is like a pyramid. On the uppermost stairs there is God, Light and Truth, towards whom/which every one of us should go and whom we should try to find during

our lives. Nobody can tell the final truth of this. We are only human beings and we cannot imagine ourselves to be above somebody else. One has to be humble at one's task and believe in it. I am happy when I reach the next level in the pyramid. The nearer to God, Light and Truth I come the stronger my soul becomes. My spiritual conviction is that my task will also be crystallized clearer the higher I get in the development of my consciousness.

What is your level of consciousness like now? What do you want to become conscious of?

- I love nature, I love people and I love this world I live in. It is the basic fact and it makes me happy in performing my task. I try to transmit love. I wish that people learned to love nature and their fellow people more and more. The stronger the love between people is the nearer we come to this ideal of mine, that goodness holds the world together. If everyone had a strong belief in this goodness so everything that lies lower in this pyramid of consciousness would diminish, people who are full of dirt in the soul: envy, vanity, self-conceit, greed, intrigues, crime and the like. The lower level of consciousness you have, the farther you are from God, Light and Truth.

After all philosophical ideas are very simple when you understand what they are about. For myself I can say that I can convey my own level of consciousness only through my deeds. I can only ask how free I am from this dirt, human weakness and the seven mortal sins.

How does the presence of God and Goodness manifest itself in what you are and what you do?

- I feel that I have received a certain task and certain things have become clear in the course of my life. I am just fifty and at this point in life it is typical that you can look back and you can look forward. I can see that I have lived according to the principles of goodness. I have a family: a wife and three children, it is an important thing in the service of goodness.

It is a great task to bring up children in this world and try to make them as good people as

possible. It is perhaps the greatest task given to us to manifest through our own children the level of consciousness that we have reached. It is to be perceived through your children what you have learned in life. Of course I also manifest with music and help them (my children) to advance with it. If they want to become musicians they can decide upon it themselves. I feel that I and my wife have done the right thing by giving them the opportunity. I suppose that they have music in their genes, they sing well.

We have tried to bring them up to be people who serve goodness. We have said to them that they should not speak ill of other people or swear. This I learned from my own mother. My mother always said that it is ugly to swear. It is true. If you call Satan by using these words of Mephistopheles a lot during your life the negative energy begins to stream into you.

The evil of the human being and Mephistopheles

The evil of the human being is a philosophical question. It is said that there are three different types of people: To the first type there belong the people who are born from Mephistopheles and serve Mephistopheles all their lives; to the

second type there belong those who are born from Mephistopheles but serve God all their

lives, in other words they strive towards goodness, but they have a lot of negative energy in themselves since their birth; to the third type there belong those who are born from God and serve God. This maybe sounds simple. When I meet different people I think whether they are born from Mephistopheles and still serve God when they strive for goodness though they have some negative energy. Or then I think, this is a good person because I recognize positive energy.

In other words, the classical division: black, grey an white

- In a way, there are these three. It means a lot to me. Three is also a holy number. The important trinity to me is Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.

A good person must be watchful

- If you look at the world history there

have been periods when Mephistopheles has had a great power in the world, when it has reigned. As in the 1940`s when the world was uncontrolled and chaotic. Goodness did not reign then, goodness did not hold the world together. We good people must stick together, we must believe in goodness and we must

"Creating music is for Kyllönen above all a form of human communication, of sharing feelings with others and the experience of being fellow humans. As one of his missions he has undertaken to seek out values such as virtue, righteousness and truth in the violent, chaotic world of today. The fundamental essence is thus the emotional aspect of the music, for although the world, its ideals and Zeitgeist are in a constant state of transformation, the human emotions are nevertheless lasting and universal. Composing is for Kyllönen one form of meditation. In his work he stresses the importance of intuition and associations in order to be able to link up different inner worlds, and he wants his works to be mirrors of the interaction between man, nature, and the cosmos. His ultimate aim is to transport, if only for a fleeting moment, the givers (performers) of his music and the receivers (the audience) to the springs of experiencing a sort of higher cosmic energy and 'holiness'.

In trying, through his music, to liberate his listeners from their negative feelings and to bring out the positive energy in them, Kyllönen's works are, at an abstract level, a statement on the eternal battle between good and evil in the world. Music's mission in society is thus to bring together people who think in different ways by allowing them to share the sentiments of their hearts and the common experience of beauty."

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www.fimic.fi (translated by © Susan Sinisalo)

always join our forces for goodness so that this evil does not get loose. It is an important thing considering the whole universe and mankind because without it mankind will not develop. But now I think that goodness is beginning to take more control over these evil forces because they have to be controlled all the time. In a film it is said that the worst thing that good people can do is to let evil forces act freely. It is the greatest crime that a good person can do. Why on earth do good people let evil forces do their deeds? As early as the 18th century a philosopher expressed this old thought. The greatest crime is if a good person is lazy and gives reign to the evil forces. We have a task, we must fight for goodness, a good person must be watchful.

Power of positive energy

Is the core of the power of thoughts in the fact that the energy lies in a word and in the qualitative meaning of the word? You are influenced by the energy of the words that you use? If you systematically favour positive energies through your speech, feelings, ways to act, attitudes etc. the power of the positive grows in you? Is that the idea?

- That is the conclusion I have come to. That is the idea. Of course, partly I am the result of my parents' upbringing. Do not swear, was implanted in me since I was a child. Why did my mother always say to me: Don't swear, it is ugly. Now it is very clear to me, I have realized this.

In your philosophy there is an inbuilt goodness, the level of good energy. Do you think that the music you have composed transmits good energy even when the listeners do not know that there is the positive quality and goodness?

- It comes naturally, I do not have to think about it. I have this philosophical starting point that goodness holds the world together. It is spiritual thinking, which belongs to my being, which I entirely believe in. Of course it is also reflected in my compositions. And when I perform I want to transmit positive energy. I think if this composition I am writing pleases me, so it might also please other people, who sense the same level

of vibration in their souls. Then the message has been received. When I compose I mobilize energy by the choice of instruments, e.g. in my first symphony and accordion concerto I use a lot of kettledrums because they have a lot of energy, I mobilize energy that way.

When you listen to other composers' music, do you distinguish if the music has been composed from another kind of energetical state, not as positive as yours?

- What you say is true. That is a good question. I have discussed this with many musicians. During my life I have thought about this a lot and this question is clear to me. You can sense the energy of a composition. People sometimes say that they did not feel well after listening to a certain composition. If I listen to a composer's music which has negative energy I feel that this composer has wanted to express more chaos than beauty, which is the contrary

"Kuninkaiden kirja" (The Book of Kings, 1992-2002) by Timo-Juhani Kyllönen (b. 1955) is a satirical children's opera about a King who loses his book of speeches. The kingdom is plunged into turmoil, and the desperate King tries to make up a speech of his own at an international conference. Finally, after many twists and turns, a gnome places the book on a bench in the park.

The opera lasts one and a half hours and is written, typically for Kyllönen, in a melodic, non-tonal style with idiomatic vocal writing. There are brief passages of improvisation. The composer uses Leitmotifs to illustrate the main characters and moods."

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to what I am after. My philosophical starting point is to bring out beauty out of chaos. It is the same thing as finding goodness in this evil. I try to find goodness in this evil world where we live, because everyone has something good inside. I try to arouse something good in a person who is bad. It is of course terrible to talk about a bad person, but nobody is bad entirely. I fully believe in the redeeming power of forgiveness, which is a great spiritual dimension in human life.

Do you notice the same reading a book? Do you distinguish the variations of positive and negative energies, which originate from the writer's energies at the time of the writing?

- Yes, I do. On the other hand through my music I also want to tell people that there is negative energy, but good energy overcomes it. In other words in compositions there must always be a struggle between positive and negative, goodness and evil, but positive energy always overcomes. As an artist I always want to find truth in this world. In a composition of mine there can be a dramatic or very powerful message and I want to manifest the struggle between good and evil. Without this tension there might not be art that touches people. When we live in this world we sense all these energies. That is negative energy, this is positive energy. All people transmit all kinds of energies.

Ability to recognize bioenergy

Grandmother was a clairvoyant

- I am rather sensitive to these energies, my grandmother was a fortune-teller and clairvoyant, who thought of these things very much. I have received perhaps through my genes from my grandmother this sensitivity to a person's energy field, a sort of ability to sense bioenergy very quickly. Perhaps that is why I am so interested in psychological and parapsychological things.

- As a little boy I saw how there came people from far, the same people year after year as far as

Sweden to see my grandmother. The things that grandmother had told these people, happened. It also makes a little boy think. I remember well a man who came to grandmother and wanted to know about his future. Grandmother said that she could not tell him anything. The man laughed and said that he had heard so much about grandmother. Then he went to the bus stop and died of a heart attack. I asked grandmother how she could see that the man would die. She said that he had had no colours in his aura. I know an incident of my grandmother's childhood, she was only five when she foresaw that a neighbour was being carried in a white coffin and in a couple of weeks he died.

Dzuna Guided about Bioenergy

- As I was studying in Moscow I became acquainted with an Assyrian-born healer, Dzuna Davitasvili. Dzuna helped Breznev and other important party leaders when no doctor could help any more, she came and worked with her hands. Dzuna had incredibly long fingers. I have never seen as long fingers before or after. There are only five such healers in the whole world as have as strong an energy field as Dzuna. There was a programme of her on Finnish television, too. Dzuna had an officially recognized position as a scientific assistant in Parapsychological Institute, where telepathy and bioenergy were researched. There were documentary films of her where she levitated.

- I got acquainted with her in 1984 and she became a good friend of mine. It was not a very simple thing because she only received people with positive energies. She could turn people from her door if she recognized a negative energy field. Her home was a sacred place for her, she had a lot of icons on her walls and she did not let anything negative inside. She told me as early as 1984 when I got to know her that I could be a healer and I could heal if I liked because I have a lot of positive energy and it comes through my hands. However, it is not my task to heal with my hands but I can canalize energy through music. I realized then

that I must canalize this positive energy with my music, and it is healing energy. I notice when I direct a choir or an orchestra that there comes energy through my hands. Dzuna said that artistically talented people generally have a strong parapsychological gift. This was true about my grandmother, too, she was also artistically very talented.

Your bioenergy has been tested?

- A singer who belongs to Bionergy Association has tested this. He has a strong bioenergy himself. He tested the power of my thinking and energy by holding a metal wire frame in his hands at ten meters' distance. The metal wire frame started moving when I thought about it. He told me that I had a very strong energy. I am conscious of my strong bioenergy. If I start thinking of something or somebody my energy starts working in some way. A lot of people have to a certain extent this kind of healing energy in their hands. We just do not know about its existence.

I have had this sensitivity since my birth, I think that artists must be sensitive. With sensitivity you can reach the free flight of imagination and the touch of "creative madness". Parapsychology and art have a lot to do with each other. This kind of supernatural phenomena, like telepathy belong to artists' being. I know, however, that some people do not accept my energy. You cannot please everybody! People either love me or they do not love me. Is this a dilemma or a problem? It is not a problem to me, I am what I am, like this I am genuine and sincere in everything that I do.

Creative power

You seem to be bubbling with embarrassingly strong creative power? Where are the sources of creativity? Where does the energy come from? Goodness and God?

- I have had this energy and creative power since I was born. I have perceived that when I sing I send a stream of energy though I have not a singer's training, I have taken lessons

only for a year in the preparatory faculty of Moscow University. The human voice is the most natural channel through which you are able to communicate with people. When you go into the text the singing voice is a really natural way to express the message. Maybe music is communicated more concretely with text. This has to do with languages, too. Every language has a melody of its own, I know it, I speak seven languages. I think that musicality and language skills are near to each other. It is a gift from God if you have a singing voice. Juha Kotilainen and I performed in a private occasion in Espoo and people came and said: Unbelievable, when you sing, mood and spiritual being are elevated. How can you transmit such energy that raises one into another level? Last Saturday there came people thanking me and wondering how I could sing and play in that way. I say that I am a hundred per cent myself, I do not have to think of how I can co-ordinate many things at the same time: sing, whistle and play. The motor co-ordination must function. I have received this gift and from this gift I must give. It would be selfish to keep it for myself only. Some Finns are, however, jealous if you are different from the others and if you have more abilities than the others. Why don't people just receive good energy? I believe in goodness and positive energy, why on earth should anyone be jealous? It is not taken away from anyone. Is it that these people have not come nearer to God, Light and Truth in their own development of consciousness? Still, I have no right to condemn others, I am only a human being.

Composing demands powerful energy. You compose through your whole being, not just your intellect?

- Yes, I compose through intuition, I must say that I am sometimes very tired after I have composed for a long time. I may sleep for a few hours and then I am fresh again. Many people do not come to think about how much energy a creative process requires. Somebody might think that it happens just like that. Compos-

ing takes energy 100 or 150 per cent. People do not always think that I compose when I just seem to be sitting. Then I am thinking about notes, the colours of notes and chords. It is a long process to get the right colour into music. Composing can be compared to oil painting, I painted quite a lot as a child.

- Recently I was interviewed by the Local Radio, they asked me what creativity is about and how it is manifested. I like dancing, sitting in a chair I start improvising and moving when I search music with the piano. There is movement with creating, it is the movement of energy. A dancer transmits energy, too. South-American culture has left a permanent influence on me, I like dancing, rhythm appeals to me. If you have seen an Afro-Peruvian dance to Afro-Peruvian music, it is an experience that you will never forget. There is also movement, the movement of energy in performing. At the creative moment in composing there is movement. I start walking, I drink a lot of water and walk. After a long walk I have found the solution.

- The creative process with me happens in this way, when I start writing in a blank paper there is nothing at first. It is the most difficult moment in creating. When the initial idea emerges it originates from something. As with Beethoven, he got an initial musical idea when he heard somebody knocking at the door. I sometimes hear a bird sing a superb interval, there is this kind of little idea at first. And then creative imagination starts working.

- In composing it is important for me to control the orchestral colours, that all groups of instruments can be heard, that orchestration is transparent. I am happy that I received

Russian teaching in orchestration because there they emphasize controlling the orchestra. Composing I use the piano or composing by the computer I use the synthesizer, I do not use my main instrument, the accordion in composing. It was a part of my studies in Moscow to play through Bach's organ works, so I got acquainted with the complicated figures of the fugue, the fact that harmony gets more colour in composing, helps.

Powerful intuition

- In Moscow with Dzuna there was a musician who looked into my hands and said that I had a double intuition line and that it is unusual to have such a strong and clear intuition line. You need intuition in creative work, without intuition you cannot produce anything new. Creative work is energy, intuition is also energy.

Intuition is super intelligence above our ordinary intelligence, which puts all things in order though I do not know myself why.

- I do not know what words could describe the fact that I have always trusted in intuition and God, a higher spiritual power. I have a strong conviction that there is God who helps me. It gives me strength, energy, which I am

happy for. I know that when I trust my intuition the compositions become as I have imagined them to be. They just take their form and I myself may wonder how it became like this, everything is in order, no extra bar. I sometimes wonder how I can know that this bar is not needed or that cannot be taken away because then the whole construction will collapse. E.g. if you take away one bar from a prelude of Chopin's it does not work, it is so close.

"Timo-Juhani Kyllönen's style of composition has always favoured such features as recognizable motif-and melody work, clear harmonious structure, chamber musical polyphony, strong rhythmic basis and emotional expressive quality. Twenty years ago this style was considered "old-fashioned". There is an interesting situation in Finnish contemporary music now, many modernist composers from the 1980's have changed their aesthetics towards similar aims as the above mentioned."

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Composing is meditation

- I have read quite a lot about yoga and meditation. Raja-yoga interests me most because I am interested in the spiritual side of yoga. I was 35 years old when my first child was born, before that I had time to read a lot. I am not interested in practising asanas, in sitting in a certain position. I have not had time, it does not suit to everybody.

- I always meditate when I compose. Meditation is for me seeking for connection with God and peace of mind. When I start thinking of a composition I empty my thoughts of everything else so that there is nothing, my head is empty. I have noticed that I have the ability to meditate, I do not have to practise it daily. When I compose I am in the state of meditation. Composing is a state of meditation, I am away entirely, I do not hear anything. The same thing happens if I paint an oil painting or draw, I am away, completely isolated, I am here but, however, I do not react to anything. When you reach this state creative, cosmic energy starts streaming, and there opens energetic connection with the cosmic power, God. When the streaming starts it brings with it a wonderful state of mind. If I did not have this connection I would be on my own and would not have this good state of mind, this feeling of happiness. I know that I feel God's presence when I work. Perhaps it is that God also helps me to reach the meditative peace with myself so that I can find the creative, right tone that I have to find. If I do not have the creative tone at the moment, the interval I wish, I then relax, meditate for a while and then energy starts streaming. Now it comes, this is the right interval, this is the right rhythmic figure, now I know, it is this and then I write it down. That's it.

Back to melody

- I represent a sort of back to melody- thinking. Emotions are important for me, my music conveys feelings and emotions to people,

because I am convinced of the fact that feelings and emotions are universal. A Chinese cries, a Finn cries, an African rejoices and laughs, just as we do. Feelings are uniting factors between people coming from different cultures. I have had concerts in many countries in different parts of the world. I am a very emotional person myself and I want to bring an emotional message to people. There is also music that is based on mathematical (constructive) constructions, because there are all kinds of composers. Every composer certainly finds his own audience, but I believe that with melodious music I have reached larger numbers of people, ordinary people who do not have musical education. You can reach larger numbers of people with music if the composition has an emotional message. If the music is powerful, you can find emotions better through melody than if I made very modern avant garde- music, which does not necessarily have the beauty. I also try to find beauty in discordant tones. My avant-garde composer colleagues have also begun to use melody, nowadays it is allowed .

It seems that music develops more and more in the direction that the limits of different styles are crossed unlike 20-30 years ago when they maintained the same style. Apparently there are good aspects in this?

- Yes, certainly. I was married to a Peruvian choir director, Maritza Núñez for twelve years, she is a writer and a dramatist nowadays and is still a good friend of mine. What we had in common was that we both aspired after goodness in our lives, we could maintain our friendship. You can bring higher spiritual power to friendship. In any case I could get in touch with Latin-American culture through her. Meeting with different cultures has been a natural part in my cosmopolitan background. I have used many kinds of folklore in my music. It cannot be said that classical music should have strictly defined features. We do not live any more in Schubert's or Beethoven's time when there was a clear distinction between classical and popular music. But if you look

into Johann Sebastian Bach's music, so you can find there all these dances, gigues and minuets. Beethoven used folk dances and so did Glinka. Everybody is influenced by folk music. Now the world is much smaller, it is possible to get acquainted with this universe. It has led to the situation that different styles are perhaps more blended in modern music and classical music. When I write for a traditional band I use the accordion, synthesizer, guitar, drums and bass, e.g. on a just published CD-record where my daughters Aurora and Olivia among the others sing my song *Tre sånger för barn (Three songs to children op.12)* and where I play the midiaccordion myself. But when I compose for a symphony orchestra it is a completely different world. A

professional composer must be able to make all kinds of music, for people of all ages; small children, young people and adults.

Music is communication

- Composers and artists generally have a need to communicate with people and try to find common feelings and vibrations in their souls. Feedback is important for an artist. I must say that at the concert at Kaukalinna near Savonlinna where we were at the beginning of August there was interaction and change of energies between the audience and the artists. Both parties received something, we artists gave and we received, we gave back all the more and the audience received. This process is peculiar when it starts:

There is the performer, there is the audience and the third party is the composer. Without the composition there is no performance and without the audience there is no communication.

Art must touch larger numbers of people, not just remain in my inner spiritual life that can only be viewed by myself. The artist must also be selfish, I must as a composer believe in what I do and I must be convinced that I really want to express what I feel about the pain of the universe and the events of the world. This unusually strong need for communication is the deepest reason why I have become an artist.

My first string quartet was born out of sorrow

- My first string quartet opus 3, *In Memory of A Friend* is connected

with the death of my dear friend, his name was Lars-Erik Schönberg. He was a set designer in e.g. Tilateatteri. He died quite unexpectedly at the age of 38 in an operation and he left behind three small children. I received the sad news in Moscow and I wanted to express the sorrow through music. I had to think about what combination of instruments could express intimate feelings. My first string quartet opus 3 was born out of this sorrow in 1984. The work has four parts, there is sorrow in the first part, there is also consolation in the work, there is a strong emotion in the music. For me it was a breakthrough work as a composer. When I came to Finland it

"Timo-Juhani Kyllönen's chamber music production (e.g. two string quartets 1985, 1989), is connected with Russian free-tonal, motif-technique and counterpoint tradition, the influential figures of which were Shostakovitz and Prokofjev. It is easy to find the standard of comparison with Kyllönen's melancholy, epic melos in the Slavic tradition- e.g. in the first string quartet (To the Memory of a Friend) and in a Trio for Accordion, Violin and Cello (1986). Later there have appeared more modern elements, clusters, glissandos and improvisational parts (Elegia Quasi una Sonata for Violin and Piano 1987). The other major part of Kyllönen's works is vocal music, mostly pieces for children's- and ladies' choir. These works have been coloured by the influence of South-American or Spanish (or from Spanish into Finnish translated) texts, written by Peruvian Carmen Luz Bejarano and Kyllönen's first wife, the Peruvian-born choir director Maritza Núñez."

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Timo-Juhani Kyllönen, Juha Kotilainen and Seeli Toivio, the artists, taking a view of the venue for the concert in the garden of Kaukalinna and performing at the concert (small picture).



was played at the Temppliaukio (Rock) Church at a concert which the Helsinki Festival arranged. The string quartet is on the CD published by Finlandia-records in 1990 and it is played a lot in many countries because the record had an international circulation.

Erik Tawaststjerna wrote a very detailed analysis of my first string quartet, which was performed in Ritarihuone in 1986, immediately after I had come to Finland. I have never received as good and detailed an analysis of any other work of mine. He went into it, he wanted to have the notes in advance and he studied them. On Finland's and the Nordic Countries' televisions there was a series of four string quartets, in addition to my quartet there were Joonas Kokkonen's, Per Henrik Nordgren's and Jouni Kaipainen's string quartets.

Promotion cantata of the power of nature

- I was doing my licenciate and doctor's studies in composing at the Sibelius Academy in 1990 when I realized that I am a composer primarily, I must write the next composition. It will be my doctor's thesis. I said this when I was at the promotion of Philosophical Faculty in 2000 and my promotion cantata *Met-sässä tuulee* (The Wind in the Forest) op. 58 was performed at Finlandia Hall. It was interesting that it was just the promotion of Philosophical Faculty with 800 doctors and masters. Aale Tynni's poem *The Wind in the Forest* was played in the hall. It reflects the time after

the war. I was asked to compose a cantata to this poem. It is a fine poem, it tells about the power of nature. I sat there and listened for 26 minutes when Ylioppilaskunnan Soittajat (Players of the Students' Union) played and Akateeminen Laulu (University Singers) sang. The premiere was conducted by Jan Söderblom. Everybody sat there listening. I went to the stage and received the applause as it had been a doctor's top hat. I felt energy moving. I had a feeling that now these people are receiving something. The Finnish intelligentsia were present, I do not know if they realized what was happening.

Children as an audience

- Talking about the change of energies, children are honest. When I perform to children, I am wet with sweat. All the time there must be something going on, a lot of energy moving, you cannot relax a moment because with children you have to be in full swing. I have visited e.g. schools in Espoo telling about the composer's profession. I give a lecture to the forms from 1 to 6 at comprehensive school. First I e.g. tell them about my first symphony, how this symphony was composed, and I try to tell vividly about what it could contain, then I play Latin-American percussion instruments, the Indian flute, accordion, and I sing with them. In the end we always sing Sukkarock (sockrock), which is also on the newly-published CD-record of Leikkikoulu (kindergarten) Sockan. There is a karaoke part with Finnish text. My daughters Aurora and Olivia and a girl called Fanny sing in the record. When the lecture was over all the 150 pupils of this school wanted to have my autograph, they queued for it. It was an amazing experience. Children are sincere, these children wanted to have my autograph of their own accord.

Children's choir suite number 1. op.7

- If the flight of imagination is as free as mine it is easy to get the insight into the children's world and imagine what children would like to hear. I imagine that I am as sincere and honest as children are. I have written a lot of music

for children. Melody is important for children and so is rhythm. In my work composed to Maritza Núñez's text I have used Peruvian percussion, e.g. a boxlike instrument that Afro-Peruvian boys use selling things in the streets. The instrument has found its way from Peru to Spain where it is used in flamenco music. I like using a lot of different percussion instruments, it is reflected in orchestration. I have used a lot of percussion instruments in my accordion concerto op. 60, too. In this children's choir work in addition to the Peruvian instruments there is the clockwork and triangle in the last part. The work has five parts and the theme of the text goes as follows: In the first part a child falls asleep, *Nuku hento unelmani* (Sleep my tender dream), in the second part *Tähtikuoro tulee herättämään pienen lapsen* (A choir of stars comes to wake up the little child), in the third part *Lapsi näkee unta, että on Andien vuoristossa, tyttö laskeutuu alas vuorilta tanssien koko Juhannusyön* (The child dreams of the Andes, a girl descends from the mountains dancing for the whole Midsummer Night), in the fourth part *Neekeripoika myy kuumia maissipiirakoita ja tanssii* (A black boy sells hot maize pies and dances) and in the fifth part *Lapsi nukahtaa uudelleen ja herää: "This is only a dream"* (The child falls asleep again and wakes up: "This was only a dream").

How do you describe as a composer how feelings and energy are manifested in your music?

- As an example I will take the first part of my accordion concerto, which I describe in this way: The part starts with an tritonus-second-interval initial motive, it functions as a fiery (con fuoco) source of energy to the whole of the first part. The accordion solo gets its basic energy from this overture of the orchestra, with the help of which the first common chief culmination of the orchestra and the soloist is achieved in the middle. It is followed by the cadence of the accordion spiced with the 16-time rhythm figure of the conga drums. This figure is some kind of central rhythm

motif repeated through the whole work, which also becomes the final climax of the energy concentration of the first part. I have travelled a lot in Latin-America, which has brought different elements in my music, perhaps most in the handling of the rhythm section. The symphony of the sounds of nature that I have experienced in the jungle and Finnish forests mixed with the sounds of the city is also reflected in this work. The nearness of nature has always been important for me. There is my analysis of this work in the net. (www.fimic.fi)

Music played Abroad

Having a look at Timo-Juhani Kyllönen's list of works and curriculum vitae one cannot be but surprised at the abundance of international connections. He is known and his music is played in many countries.

- How many souls I have reached through my music! The language of music is amazing, because it is universal, it does not have to be translated. I believe in the emotion and the power of melody. Now after 16 years of its publication the record with my compositions published by Finlandia-records is still played a lot abroad. It has found its way to many countries. In Peru my music is played on the classical channel, which has tens

of millions of listeners. According to the information in the net e.g. *Suite for String Orchestra op.27* has recently been played there. It is nice to see unexpectedly Timo-Juhani Kyllönen's name after the names of Brahms and Beethoven. My

music was played for half an hour and somebody told the listeners about my music. In Arizona, USA, a classical channel played the whole of this Finlandia-record and gave information about my production. In New York a radio channel played my string quartet. And think about it, in Brazil the classical channel has played my music. There are probably about 8 million listeners there, so I was told. It is such a big country. The Australian classical channel has also played this record in its programmes. The Internet has really made the world small.

Recordings, radio- and TV-programmes, concerts

Timo-Juhani Kyllönen's choir music has also been recorded, a Japanese choir won a national choir

competition in Japan in 1999 and recorded there *Sarjan sekakuorolle op.5 (Ciclo para coro mixto)*, A series for a mixed choir). A juvenile choir from Venezuela recorded on their CD-record in 1999 *Danza Negroide, op.7d*, a part of the children's choir series. Likewise a Canadian juvenile choir recorded the same piece of work

"Timo-Juhani Kyllönen (b. 1955) drew a great deal of influence from Russian music – mainly Shostakovich and also Prokofiev – while studying in Moscow for ten years (1976–1986), first the accordion and then composition. Kyllönen's emotional music contains both Slavic *sentimento* and Finnish melancholy. On the other hand, he also conjures up powerful drama, often fired by *ostinatos* or shifting time signatures. The extremes of his stylistic range meet for instance in "Elegia 'quasi una sonata'" (1987) for violin and piano, where the violin weaves an improvised glissando over hammered clusters in the piano, followed by a diatonic melody nearly National Romantic in tone.

The tempestuous yet elegiac First String Quartet (1985), sub-titled "Ystävän muistolle" (To the memory of a friend), is Kyllönen's earliest notable chamber music work. Whereas this work is reminiscent of Shostakovich, his Second String Quartet (1989) is closer to the Bartók tradition and is also more modern in sound. Other chamber music works of his that we might mention are the four Trios for different ensembles, the first (violin, cello, accordion; 1986) and fourth (accordion, flute/violin, clarinet/violin; 1994) of which include Kyllönen's own instrument.

© Kimmo Korhonen, Finnish Chamber Music, 1999. www.fimic.fi

last year. The Tapiola Choir also recorded it for Ondine-records and performed it on their concert tours in tens of countries all over the world. In 2004 Kyrksläatts damkör (a Finnish ladies' choir) directed by Kyllönen published a CD of their 25th anniversary repertoire etc. Choirs order a lot of compositions.

There have been concerts of Kyllönen's compositions in many countries e.g. in Brazil in Santos and Sao Paulo, in Peru, in Germany, in Israel, in Ireland, in Sweden, in Russia, in the United States and several in Finland. Many music festivals have included Timo-Juhani Kyllönen's compositions in their programmes. He was the first Scandinavian composer in 1997 in Brazil in Musica Nova Festival, which is the oldest Latin American music festival. Radio-and TV-channels in different countries have made programmes of Timo-Juhani Kyllönen and his music. E.g. the Dutch Radio broadcast an hour-long programme in 1990. There was a performance of *Awakening* op.23b on the Latvian TV in 1992.

On the Swedish Radio in 1992 there was a live broadcast of concerts in two cities and the presentations of the works before the concerts. A 40-minute radio programme in connection with a concert in Sao Paulo in 1997 had two million listeners. On FST TV-channel there was an interview and *Bird improvisation*-performance in 2005 and several other broadcasts let alone concerts and performances in the home country. Many of Timo-Juhani Kyllönen's works have achieved a permanent position in different musicians' and choirs' repertoires both in Finland and abroad.

Fan mail from abroad

- I recently received fan mail from New York, USA, it said: "I have your records, could I have your photo and autograph". I get this kind of mail from abroad. I am now fifty, and my old fellow-students from Moscow have contacted me through the net. The net connects, it is easier to write. There has been an interactive stream of energy, which circulates a lot of new energy. The net democratizes the whole music world.

- I can tell an interesting story of the fact how this energy is transmitted and the message is forwarded. About seven years ago an American choir director, Jerry Jordan phoned and told me that the Mississippi University mixed choir, which he directed, had won a competition in Milan, Italy in 1999 with my work *Ciclo para coro mixto* op.5. We love your music, he said. He was visiting Finland with five American choir directors and wanted to order a choir work from me. I wondered how it had come about that he had my choir work. I had stayed in Paris in a studio in 1989 for three months and I visited the Notre Dame church. I had a few choir notes with me and I gave him one of them there in the church. It was the first note published by Musiikki Fazer (Fazer Music) 16-17 years ago. He did not even remember the meeting in the church, the note had been buried for six years in a pile of his notes before he paid attention to it. He had heard this series performed by the Danish Radio Chamber Choir in Brussels and then remembered that he had this note at home. Then he started practising it with his choir and performed the series in ten countries and on top of all they won the competition in Milan with it. Is it not interesting, in 1989 I gave him the note in the Notre Dame after a few minutes' talk, he does not remember the event at all, but I remember it. You cannot know about these links in advance, but it feels nice when the message is received and forwarded.

Coming and in preparation

Three CD-records

- Since the beginning of this year favourable energies have been on the move. Alba records, which publishes classical music gave the green light to three different recording projects. I believe that the music that gets circulated internationally transmits good energy. Through the coming three new records I can get in touch with larger numbers of people. The previous internationally circulated record published by Finlandia records was released 16 years ago, it is a long time. The

record sold 3000 copies, which is quite well for modern music. Perhaps it can be bought in second-hand sale. Now is the time for my music again, there is a will to publish it.

Recording a concert in St Petersburg

- The first record will consist of *Symphony number 1*, op.8, Accordion concerto op.60, Concerto Grosso op. 65 and A Symphonic Poem for Orchestra Lichtenthal op. 43. In other words four large orchestral works. Alba records records these at a concert for my orchestral music in St Petersburg next year on the 30th of March. It will be an important occasion for me. The concert will take place at the famous Capella Concert Hall opposite the Eremitage with the Academic State Capella Symphonic Orchestra conducted by Aleksander Chernuchenko. Matti Rantanen will be the soloist in my accordion concerto.

The first symphony is one of my largest orchestral works with a lot of my philosophy. My message will perhaps be expressed more powerfully with so great a number number of musicians conveying it. This connection with St Petersburg already started in 2003 when my accordion concerto was performed at the Philharmonic Hall with Aleksander Chernuchenko as the conductor. The accordion soloist was then Oleg Sharov.

Church music and ladies' choir music

- On the second record there will be church music, texts influenced by the Bible, e.g. *Ave Maria*, *Lux Aeternae* and *Agnus Dei*. The singers will be Juha Kotilainen, baritone and Kirsi Tiihonen, soprano. There will also be three Allelujas for the organ, which Kari Jussila will play. The artists Lauri Toivio, flute, Veli Kujala, accordion, Seeli Toivio, cello and Pasi Pirinen, trumpet will play for the record, too. These artists are among the best in Finland.

- The third record will include music for ladies' choir and orchestra. The orchestra is Amici Musici directed by Luiz Ramirez, the ladies' choir is still an open question, however, Kirsi Tiihonen will sing the soprano part.

Under preparation

- Now I am composing for Kuopio City Orchestra made to order Maritza Núñez poem

collection *Amor Vivus* op. 77. Juha Kotilainen will sing it. The premiere will be in October 2007 in Kuopio. I like philosophically multi-dimensional texts. E.g. Maritza Núñez' poem, which I have composed for soprano and piano named *Dondiegos*, op.49. There are different worlds in the poem, Ra, Guards at the horizon, Hallelujah, the flower opening at night. For me it signifies the light of consciousness and comes near to the spiritual path and my will to bring out goodness.

- There will also be an opera for families *Roope-poika joka ei uskaltanut pelätä* (Little Roope who dared not be afraid), op.75, to Leena Laulajainen's libretto. It will be premiered on the 18th of November 2007 at Martinus Hall in Vantaa, I will conduct the performance myself. The opera was ordered by the operatic society of the Suzuki-Families Ltd. The orchestra will be Amici Musici. This work is supported by Finnish Cultural Foundation.

The Organ Night and Aria festival in Espoo and its art director Kari Tikka has ordered from me a five part *Messun laulusolistielle, orkesterille ja uruille* (Mass for vocalists, orchestra and organ) to be premiered in summer 2008.

Greetings from Norway

- I just returned from Oslo. There was the premiere of my three-part work *Munch-svit for a mixed choir*, op.76 at the banquet hall of the University of Oslo, where there are the frescoes of Edvard Munch's. It is not generally known that Munch was also a poet. Munch's three poems to his best-known works "The Scream", "Madonna" and "Moon Light" are the basis of the choir series. Think that these stolen works "The Scream" and "Madonna" were found just before my composition was premiered in Norway. I also gave a lecture on my choir music at the Oslo Music College. The work was ordered by the choir director Tone Bianca Dahl and Schola Cantorum of the University of Oslo. The work was warmly received by the choir and the large audience, there were almost 500 people present. People I did not know came to comment on the performance

and thank me after the performance. This is always a good sign. Some of the singers and the director told me that they had experienced my work beautiful in harmony and dramatically powerful. They had also felt that in my work I had found the dramatic energy of Munch's paintings and poems. I returned to Finland with a happy heart.

Creative artist's fate

The audience understands your musical language. What about the experts?

- Well, it is more difficult with people who have their own opinions and interests. I must admit I was not awarded an artist's grant by National Council for Music this year and I have no knowledge about my income next year. Twice I have been awarded a three-year grant, six years together, the first period was 1991-1993 and the second 1996-1998. It is eight years since I received something. Some other funds have occasionally given me e.g. half-a-year- and one year-grants. Many people think that I should be entitled to a five- or three-year grant, which I have been expecting for eight years. I sometimes wonder why I have to go through all this. Who gets those grants anyway, it is never impartial- it is always subjective. My music is played in many countries. I am not unknown.

- I have been a freelance musician in Finland for 20 years though there have been difficulties since my income has been occasional. Fortunately I have an understanding wife who supports me. I have an inner conviction that this is my work, I cannot do anything else. I cannot commit myself to a post. I would not have the energy for creative work then. Once a week I direct a ladies' choir in an open college and I compose at home, these are the two regular activities. Every now and then I perform as an accordion artist with e.g. Juha Kotilainen and some other musicians and I occasionally conduct my own compositions with orchestras. I must use and divide the energy right, it

cannot be used for too many things, because in that case composing would become impossible. There are also good powers and people who believe in my music such as my friend Juha Kotilainen. He is totally convinced of the fact that my music will live and he wants to support me in many ways.

Are the great creative years and works ahead?

- They are coming, but it is also important for me what I have done by now. I was already spiritually mature when I came back to Finland as a thirty-year-old composer in 1986. I do not know whether I was precocious, but I do not have to be ashamed of the works I did when I was young.

- In Finland the audience understands and appreciates me as a composer. But contemporaries cannot know which of us eventually will come ashore from the stream of time. All of us composers are sitting in the same boat, rowing along in the stream of time. Time will tell, perhaps in fifty years which of us rowers, composers will come ashore, and which will not. Nobody can know that. We must be humble with our work, do honestly and sincerely our own work. Time will tell how significant it has been. I am not worried about that. I only concentrate on composing as much as I can and write down as many of my thoughts as I can during my lifetime. ●

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The interview has been published by the Finnish Spiritual Culture Magazine Uusi Safiiri. Uusi Safiiri is published only in Finnish.

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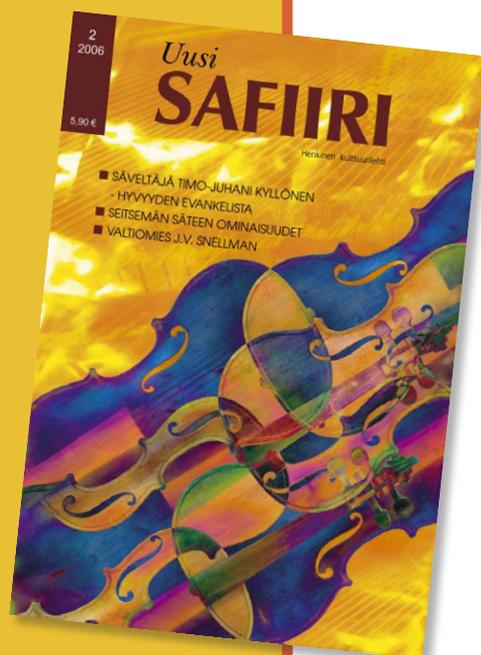
UUSI SAFIIRI 32. VOL.

Publisher:
Via-Akatemian säätiö

Address of the editorial office:
Uusi Safiiri, PL 4, 58201 Kerimäki, Finland

Editor and subeditor:
Terttu Seppänen
+35850 5679630, terttu.seppanen@via.fi

ISSN 0781-7975



www.via.fi/safiiri.htm