

Lepo Sumera - Symphony No. 5 • Music For Chamber Orchestra • In Memoriam (1996)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 31 May 2018 15:23 -

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1 *Symphony No.5* (1995) 33:33 Music For Chamber Orchestra (1977) (17:12) 2 *I. Energico* 2:30 3 *II. Cantabile* 14:37 4 *In Memoriam* (1972) 22:30
Malmö Symphony Orchestra Paavo Järvi - conductor

I am still warming up to this CD - the fifth Symphony is the most complex one I've heard from Sumera. It is in a single long movement. There are few melodies to latch on, almost an exercise in long range planning and movement than a symphony in several movements. I like some moments more than others, but it is certainly more experimental than his other music and I admire that.

The music for chamber orchestra is a bit too long in places without the forward momentum I feel is present in his symphonies. *In Memoriam* sounds like a piece by a recent music graduate who is more in love with orchestral sounds than form.

Overall, I recommend this one for fans of the composer, but make sure you start with the other four symphonies before hitting this one. ---karlm, amazon.com

The most conspicuous trait of Lepo Sumera's style was the use of contrasting patterns. His music juxtaposes playfulness and suffering, show and drama, masquerade and boundless sincerity. Many of his compositions, regardless of genre, are built upon semantic provocation

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and on unexpected or dramatic confrontation of stylistic signifiers. The composer contrasts the naive with the dramatic, the earnest with humorous modes of expression, within one and the same composition. Sumera's music is also characterized by extreme attentiveness to sound and timbre.

In his 1970s works, Sumera used free dodecaphony and collage techniques. In the 1980s, Sumera turned to tonal and modal devices, applying minimalist techniques to large-scale compositions. The 1990s yielded engaging chamber pieces, electronic experiments and multi-media works.

Lepo Sumera was one of the most resplendent symphonists in Estonian music, the composer of six symphonies. His Symphony No. 1 (1981) that utilised repetitive-minimal structures as building blocks of a large-scale symphonic composition accomplished a "style revolution" in Estonian music.

Simultaneity, variant-based development and free-floating sonic fields remain constant features of Sumera's symphonies. Since No. 3, the independent roles of harmony and timbre grow in significance. Beginning with No. 4, expressionistic tendencies take hold.

Lepo Sumera studied composition at the Tallinn Music High School with Veljo Tormis and at the Tallinn Conservatoire with Prof. Heino Eller (1968–1970). After Eller's death, he studied with Heino Jürisalu (1970–1973). From 1979–1982, he pursued postgraduate studies with Prof. Roman Ledenev at the Moscow Conservatoire.

From 1971–1980, Lepo Sumera worked as sound director at Estonian Radio, from 1980–1985 he was senior adviser at the Estonian Composers' Union. From December 1988 to April 1992, Lepo Sumera was Estonian Minister of Culture. From 1978, Sumera taught composition at the Estonian Academy of Music (Professor since 1993). He also served as first director (until 1999) of electronic music studio of the Estonian Academy of Music established in 1995. From 1993, Lepo Sumera was the chairman of the Estonian Composers' Union.

Sumera's works have been performed in the majority of European countries and the US, Canada, Australia, Japan and Cuba. In 1989, he was the resident composer at the New Beginnings Festival in Glasgow and in 1993 he was featured composer at the Chamber Music

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Festival in Norrtälje (Sweden) and at the Sydney Spring Festival of New Music (Australia). In 1988 and 1989, Sumera delivered lectures at the Summer Courses of New Music, Darmstadt.

In 1990, Sumera's music for Tauno Kivihall's puppet film "The Brides of Death" ("Surmamörsjad") received the award for best film score at the Film Festival in Espinho (Portugal). In 1997, his Symphony No. 5 was chosen the recommended work at the International Rostrum of Composers in Paris in 1996. ---emic.ee

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