

# A Shape of Finns to come

## Three decades or so of new Finnish wind band music

A sea change occurred in Finnish wind band music in the 1990s as a reform of traditional wind ensembles got under way and active efforts were undertaken to find new kinds of repertoire. This reform actually had its roots in the late 1980s, and changes are still happening now, in the 2020s.

### 1980s: On the threshold of a new era

For a long time, the repertoire of traditional Finnish wind bands consisted of marches and of songs and dances arranged by the conductors themselves. Only for a great occasion might one go so far as to commission a piece for wind band from a well-known composer. The practice of writing original music for wind band did not emerge in Finland until the 1970s.

It was then that the narrow original repertoire began to grow, as a number of classical contemporary Finnish composers – most notably **Einojuhani Rautavaara** – began to write music for the ensemble. Their works, however, remained unknown to the vast body of amateurs in the field because of their challenging instrumentations and musical complexity.

In the 1980s, however, the domain of Finnish wind band music gradually began to change with the emergence of a new generation of musicians. Now, at the very latest, the remnants of the old 'brass seven' tradition began to give way to a more modern wind band sound, and ensembles began to augment their ranks and to seek new musical challenges.

New Finnish wind band works for occasional and concert use began to emerge, written not only for professionals but with amateurs in mind too. Composers who wrote music specifically for youth ensembles and amateurs – including **Lasse Eerola**, **Harri Wessman**, **Atso Almila** and **Timo Katila** – aimed to make amateur ensembles aware of modern composition styles but in an accessible form. Pioneering composers and also a handful of music organisations were seminal in broadening the horizons of Finnish wind band music in the 1980s.



New composers emerged in this specialist field: **Harri Mäntynen** and brothers **Jukka** and **Markku Viitasaari**. The phenomenon was pioneered by Puhkupillit, the wind band of the University of Jyväskylä, throwing down the gauntlet to young composers to produce youthful, rhythmic material to augment the traditional wind band repertoire. Following Mäntynen's example, the Viitasaari brothers began to use Puhkupillit as a workshop for new compositions, and before long they had written what became the core of the new rhythm music repertoire for wind bands. This has proven to be a particularly good fit for youth ensembles.





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The Finnish repertoire of military bands mainly consisted of arrangements, and still does. Because military conductors are required to be competent in writing wind band arrangements, their efforts have resulted in a considerable body of repertoire. Eventually, new original wind band works began to trickle into the military music establishment too. In the mid-80's, **Timo Hytönen** of the Finnish Air Force Band wrote the award-winning bluesy march *Sininen Paraati* (*The Blue Parade*) which paved road for modern marches to come. The same

### 1990s: Transition

A great transition occurred in Finnish wind band music in the early 1990s. Thanks to the high quality of music education, Finnish amateur wind bands improved dramatically in quality, and an increasing number of them began to look to symphonic wind band music to broaden their horizons.

At the same time, repertoire drawing on popular music began to make inroads particularly in youth wind bands. The need for new music led to the emergence in the 1990s of a completely new group of composers dedicated to writing wind band music for beginners and advanced musicians alike.

Finnish military bands led the way in the development of lineups and repertoire, engaging in close cooperation with music institutes and amateur musicians in their respective regions. The spectre of disbanding military bands was on the horizon in the 1990s, and consequently these ensembles sought a more active role on the local musical scene as a means of justifying their existence.

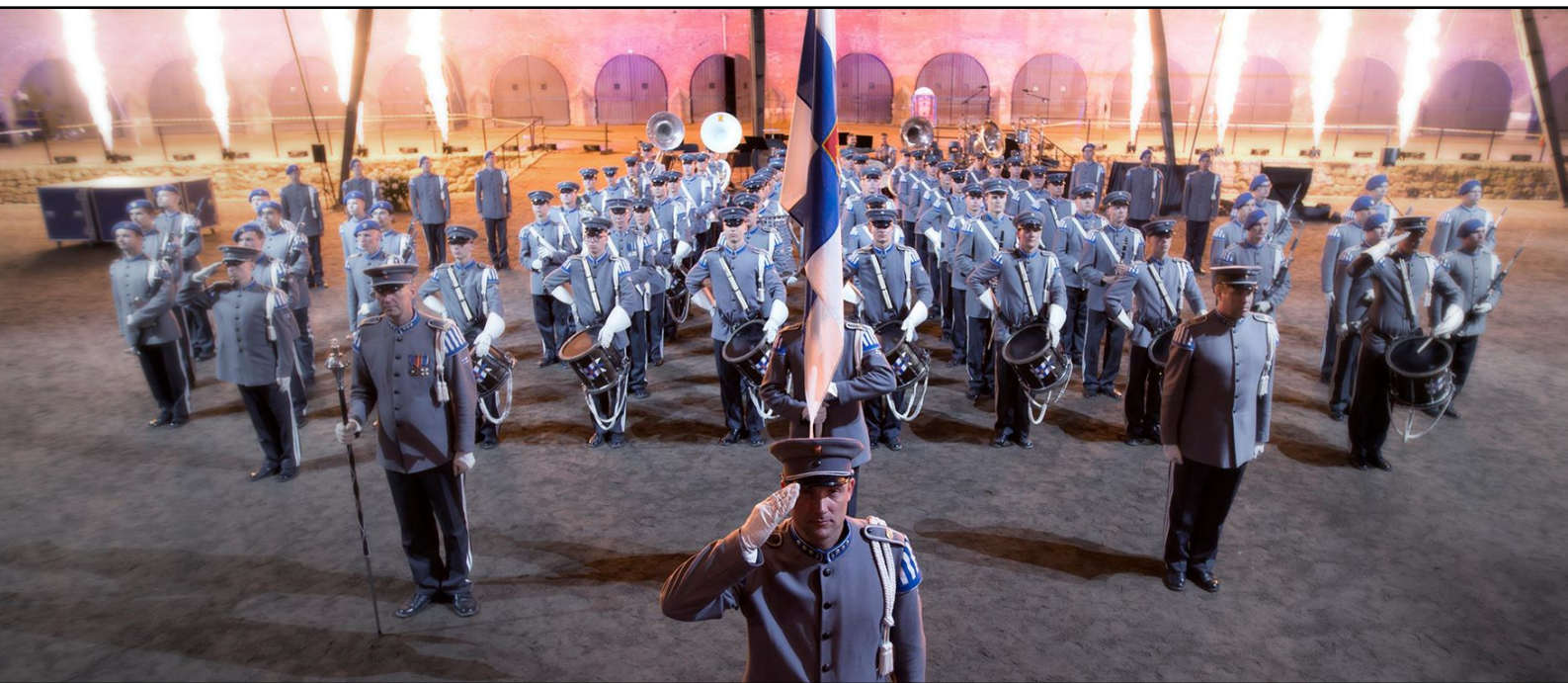
The Conscript Band of the Finnish Defence Forces was established in 1990, also the year when the first Hamina Tattoo was held. A Tattoo Tour was launched in 1993. Every year, the Conscript Band brings together a generation of wind band amateurs and professional students, thereby fostering wind band culture among musicians on the threshold of adulthood. The Helsinki Symphonic Winds was formed at the University of Helsinki at the initiative of former Conscript Band members in 1995.

FULL SCORE

### Blue parade

Sininen paraati

TIMO HYTÖNEN



**The Conscript Band of the Finnish Defence Forces at Hamina Tattoo festival.**



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The Helsinki Symphonic Winds was one of several amateur ensembles to embrace high-quality wind band literature, particularly contemporary Finnish music. The Seinäjoki Symphonic Band, the Lahti Symphonic Band and Pyynikin Puhaltajat from Tampere, for instance, performed and recorded new original works for wind band, and soon recordings of wind band music covering a wide range of styles began to be released by other amateur ensembles and military bands.

Amateur music-making in Finland was for a considerable time divided up among various generic music organisations, but during the 1990s the Finnish Wind Band Association (known by its Finnish acronym as SPOL) assumed a more prominent role as a specialist organisation in the field. It launched a sheet music publishing business and began to collaborate with other amateur musicians' associations. Joint efforts included the Finnish Wind Band Championships and Puhallinpäivät (Wind Music Conference), an annual national event first held in 1992.

The revitalised wind band scene and the increased demand for and supply of new repertoire led to a need for new distribution channels. Publishers and associations that had been selling wind band music scrapped their old-fashioned catalogues and began to focus on publishing new Finnish wind band music. New publishers dedicated solely to contemporary wind band music also emerged in the 1990s.



**CASTLE PARK -march** Timo Forsström

March tempo  $\text{♩} = 130$

Flute 1-2 +picc.  
Oboe  
Bassoon  
Clarinet 1  
Clarinet 2,3  
Bass Clarinet  
Alto Sax  
Tenor Sax  
Baritone Sax  
F Horn 1,2 (3,4)  
Trumpet 1  
Trumpet 2  
Trumpet 3  
Trombone 1,2  
Trombone 3  
Baritone  
Tuba  
Percussion 1  
Percussion 2  
Glockenspiel  
Timpani F.G.Bb.C

1

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Blossari (established in 1995) and 7ikko (or Edition 7, established in 1998) began a concentrated effort to promote Finnish composers of wind band music, bringing a number of completely new names to the attention of the field. Both publishers have a catalogue ranging from beginners' numbers to rhythm music for adolescents to advanced repertoire for the concert hall. It is no accident that the two companies are run by two of Finland's most prolific and most popular composers of wind band music, **Timo Forsström** (Blossari) and Jukka Viitasaari (7ikko).

Forsström has a knack for writing music that is sonorous and accessible to amateurs, scoring several hits in the 1990s. His up-tempo concert march *Castle Park* (1996) and the concert piece *Majakkasaari* (*Lighthouse island*, 1992) for euphonium and wind band have been frequently performed in Finland and abroad.



**Timo Forsström**



## A Shape of Finns to come - three decades or so of new Finnish wind band music

In the course of the 1990s, a handful of classical contemporary composers also became aware of the potential of wind bands and began to write occasional and concert music for them. Some of them developed a prominent profile as wind band composers alongside the other genres in their catalogue. Classical composers writing for wind band in the 1990s included **Aulis Sallinen** with *Palace Rhapsody*, 1996 and **Kalevi Aho** with *Tristia* (1999).



Some new composer names appeared in the field of wind band music in the 1990s. **Jukka Linkola** is now known as one of Finland's most versatile composers, equally at home with jazz as with classical music. Thanks to his vivacious writing, his works quickly gained popularity with amateur and professional wind bands alike. Among the most frequently performed of his works are the playfully rhythmical *Tango Tarantella* (1995) for trumpet and wind band and the majestic suite *Wedding Music* (1998). His other wind band works, such as *Sisu* (1999) and the demanding *Saxophone Concerto* (1999) have established themselves firmly in the advanced wind band repertoire.



**Jukka-Pekka Lehto** is perhaps the Finnish classical composer with the strongest wind band music profile. He has written works for adolescents and amateurs as well as for advanced professional ensembles. His music is firmly rooted in tradition, hovering on the borders of tonality and free-tonality. He employs moderate modernist means such as sections with free rhythm even in works intended for amateurs, such as *Suita* (1991) and *Kevätpuhallus* (*Blowing in the spring*, 1996). His *Concertino* (1995) for trombone and wind band and *Fantasia concertante 'Il sonno'* (1998) for flute and wind band are intended for more advanced performers; they are more modernist in approach and nearer to the mainstream of modern concert music.

A page of a musical score for a symphonic wind band. The score is written for 12 parts: Piccolo, Flute 1 and 2, Oboe 1 and 2, English Horn, Euphonium, Baritone, Bassoon 1 and 2, Clarinet in Bb, Clarinet in A, Saxophone 1 and 2, Tenor Saxophone, and Bass Saxophone. The music is in 4/4 time and features a variety of rhythmic patterns and dynamics. The score is marked with 'poco a poco crescendo' and includes dynamic markings such as 'f', 'mp', and 'p'. The page number 42 is visible in the top left corner.

**J-P Lehto** won two international composition competitions with his symphonic wind band works *Cur?* (2008).



## A Shape of Finns to come - three decades or so of new Finnish wind band music

### 2000s: Growth

As the 2000s came around, Finnish amateur wind band music was going from strength to strength. At the same time, Finland's professional military bands went through a series of radical reforms, culminating in the disbanding of seven of them in 2013. The drastic reduction in the number of professional wind bands from twelve to five ended the long-standing collaboration of military musicians and amateur musicians in many communities. However, the reform did reinforce the operating potential of the military bands that remained, and their lineups were augmented to full symphonic wind band strength. A major step was taken in 2001 when the Sibelius Academy introduced a training programme for wind band conductors in cooperation with the Defence Forces. Graduates of the wind band conducting class have found work as conductors of both military bands and amateur wind bands.

The number of wind band events and ensembles has also continued to increase. The national Wind Music Conference and the Finnish Wind Band Championships had already established themselves as leading national events, and in 2014 the Wind Music Conference took a step further by declaring itself a Nordic event: the Nordic Wind Band Conference (NWBC) was held under the management of **Raine Ampuja**, former chairman of SPOL, in Järvenpää. Its Conductors Competition brought together 20 contestants from ten countries. Traditional wind band camps and other training events continue to attract large numbers of amateur wind players of various ages.

One of the greatest success stories is the Sisu Symphonic Wind Band, established as a training ensemble in 2001. It has concert periods a few times a year, with advanced amateur musicians, music students and professionals from all over Finland meeting to rehearse and perform challenging and high-quality wind band music. Sisu has an ongoing project of commissioning works from Finnish composers, thereby augmenting the concert repertoire. So far, the ensemble has commissioned works from **Atso Almila**, **Esko Heikkinen**, **Arttu Sipilä**, **Kalevi Aho**, **Kirmo Lintinen**, **Timo Hietala** and **Timo Forsström**.

In the very recent past, two new professional, periodically operating wind bands have emerged on the Finnish scene: the Academy Winds at the Sibelius Academy and the Finnish Symphonic Wind Professionals, whose members are wind band conductors and wind instrument teachers. The Academy Winds, conducted by **Peter Ettrup Larsen** (then Associate Professor of Conducting at the Sibelius Academy), has already appeared abroad, at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago in 2014.

CONCERT

6:30PM Friday, December 19, 2014 – Skyline Ballroom 375AB

### The Sibelius Academy Wind Ensemble

*Helsinki, Finland*  
**Peter Ettrup Larsen, conductor**



**Peter Ettrup Larsen**  
Conductor



**Pasi Pirinen**  
Principal Trumpet  
Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra  
Trumpet Teacher  
Sibelius Academy



| Title                                                                                                                | Composer/Arranger         | Publisher/Distributor                                                              | Year | Grade | Time                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| Star Spangled Banner                                                                                                 | John Stafford Smith       | U.S. Department of Defense                                                         | —    | —     | 1:20                                |
| Maamme                                                                                                               | Fredric Pacius            | —                                                                                  | —    | —     | 2:30                                |
| Finlandia, Op. 26, No. 7                                                                                             | Jean Sibelius/Arvo Kuikka | Breitkopf & Härtel                                                                 | 1967 | 4     | 8:30                                |
| Trumpet Concerto<br>III. <i>Allegro spagnuolo</i>                                                                    | Ib Glindemann/Jesper Riis | Edition Wilhelm Hansen (Rental)                                                    | 2014 | 4     | 15:00<br>(7:00)                     |
| Pasi Pirinen, trumpet                                                                                                |                           |                                                                                    |      |       |                                     |
| Aerials                                                                                                              | Atso Almila               | Music Finland                                                                      | 2014 | 5     | 10:45                               |
| Dance Exalté                                                                                                         | Esko Heikkinen            | Blosari Edition<br>Sikri Lehko, alto saxophone<br>Kaapo Ijas, conductor            | 2014 | 4     | 6:10                                |
| Valkoinen Peura (The White Reindeer)<br>I. <i>Alkusoitto</i><br>III. <i>Porajot</i><br>V. <i>Finaali</i>             | Einar Englund/Petri Junna | Blosari Edition                                                                    | 2013 | 5     | 11:15<br>(1:45)<br>(1:20)<br>(2:35) |
| Grace Us                                                                                                             | Raine Ampuja              | SPOL<br>Ilari Pälli, trumpet<br>Sanna Sorvo, euphonium<br>Risto Sojakka, conductor | 2014 | 4     | 4:00                                |
| Life in the Capital City<br>I. <i>Five Corners</i><br>II. <i>Silent Park</i><br>III. <i>Song of the Old Shipyard</i> | Timo Forsström            | Blosari Edition                                                                    | 2014 | 4     | 14:20<br>(5:00)<br>(4:45)<br>(4:35) |
| Artic Samba                                                                                                          | Jukka Viitasari           | BRS Music, Inc.<br>Ville Vannemaa, soprano saxophone                               | 2014 | 4     | 4:30                                |

**261**

## A Shape of Finns to come - three decades or so of new Finnish wind band music

The increasing demand for and supply of new wind band music has enlivened the sheet music business. Alongside the old-established association-based publishers (SPOL, STM) and more recent enterprises (Blosari, 7ikko) there are now micro-publishers many of which are dedicated to the output of a single composer. These new arrivals include Edition Musact (J-P Lehto), NoteLine, A-Minor Production (**Antti Nissilä**), and Music Ilari (**Ilari Hylkilä**).

Recently, a number of active wind band composers and publishers have set their sights on the international market, combining their forces in a consortium named FinnBand. In 2010, FinnBand opened a joint online store for wind band repertoire, FinnBandShop, where sheet music may be purchased and downloaded in PDF format. The Blosari PDF-Store has the same function.

The Finnish repertoire for wind band has continued to increase in the 2000s with the emergence of new composer names. Thanks to an increasing number of commissions and composition competitions, composers who had not previously written for wind band now include wind band works in their catalogues; wind bands have been adventurous in commissioning composers who are not known for writing wind band music. Sisu and various military bands, particularly the Guards Band, have commissioned concert works from Finnish contemporary composers such as **Paavo Heininen**, **Mikko Heiniö**, **Uljás Pulkkis**, **Olli Virtaperko**, **Sampo Haapamäki** and **Juha T. Koskinen**. Works written by former military band conductor Raine Ampuja, e.g. *Turbo Express* (2014) and the former Chief Conductor of the Defence Forces, **Jyrki Koskinen**, e.g. *Katse tulevaisuuteen* (For the Future, 2002), have proved popular.

Fortunately for the wide field of amateur wind musicians, concert works for professional ensembles are not the only kind of music being commissioned. Military and amateur wind bands have also commissioned occasional music and concert music specifically for amateurs from popular wind band composers such as **Janne Ikonen**, e.g. *From the Woods* (2007), and Esko Heikkinen, *Golden Signals* (2008).

Composition competitions have inspired various composers to write new music for winds. For instance, in the competition named after K.H. Pentti in 2007, prizes went not only to traditional wind band composers but also to classical contemporary composers such as **Riikka Talvitie**, **Lotta Wennäkoski** and **Pasi Lyytikäinen**. The winner, **Juha Pisto**, made a name for himself on the wind band scene with his winning work *Leu'dd*, based on a Sámi yoik.

Many of the composers of classical music who had written for wind band in the 1990s continued to do so in the 2000s, now expanding their idiom even in works intended for amateurs. Atso Almila, for instance, has broadened his palette towards the style of modern concert music. On occasion he has used a wind band instead of a symphony orchestra in concert works such as his *Second Symphony* (2003), *Tuba Concerto no. 2* (2004) and *Oboe Concerto* (2009).

Jukka-Pekka Lehto's works for wind band are approaching modernist classical music, and some of them have received international recognition. He won two international composition competitions with his symphonic wind band works *Cur?* (2008) and *Motus contrarius* (2013). Most Finnish wind band musicians, however, know Lehto through his *Suita III* (2008), much performed by amateur ensembles. Lehto signed a publishing agreement with Metropolis-music in Belgium in 2014. So far, this agreement mainly concerns his flute music, and his wind band works continue to be available through Edition Musact.

Almila and Lehto are not the only contemporary composers to have written for wind band more than once. **Harri Ahmas** entered the genre in the early 2000s, inspired by the wind band of the Lahti Conservatory, and has subsequently written interesting concert music for professional and amateur wind bands alike. In addition to works for full band such as *Hic et nunc* (2000) and the *Sinfonietta* (2002), he has successfully combined soloist and wind band in *Three Movements* (2005) for violin and wind band and in his *Piano Concerto* (2013).

English Horn

### For the Future

*Katse tulevaisuuteen*  
-for full Concert Band-

Jyrki Koskinen

Andante  $\text{♩} = 74$

Solo *mp*

© STM-Music 2008 Published by FinnBand

For the Future.



## A Shape of Finns to come - three decades or so of new Finnish wind band music

Composers occupying both jazz and classical music spheres have also found it natural to use the wind band. Like Jukka Linkola, jazz pianist Kirmo Lintinen and vibraphonist **Arttu Takalo** have written wind band works that fall within the domain of concert music, such as Lintinen's *YTY* (2000) and *Concertino for horn and wind band* (2008) and Takalo's cinematic works *The Wastelands* (2000) and *Sci-Fi* (2006) and his more *Romantic works Sinfonia* (2005) and *Music for percussion and concert band* (2005).

**Pertti Jalava** has a background in jazz and rock music, and his output includes a number of pieces for wind band alongside his orchestral works, such as *Nest of Winds* (2001, 2nd prize in a competition in Belgium in 2002), his *Third Symphony* (2003–2008) and *Meditation* (2008).

Having said all that, the core of the Finnish contemporary wind band repertoire consists of the works written by a handful of long-standing wind band composers. Most Finnish wind bands have at least a couple of pieces by Timo Forsström and Jukka Viitasaari in their standard repertoire. Both composers have been writing music for both professionals and amateurs for about a quarter of a century, and both have achieved international recognition with their works.

Timo Forsström's compositional style has evolved from entertaining small pieces to more extensive concert works, but he has retained his original idiom and his wonderful feeling for melody. His major recent achievements include the three-movement suite *Life in the Capital City* (2010) and *Sons of the Midnight Sun*.

Jukka Viitasaari (a WASBE board member 2019-2026), initially known for his music for young performers and rhythm music, has also expanded his catalogue towards concert music. His international merits include prizes from 16 international composition competitions, including 1st prize in the USA for *Dance of the Epiphytes* in 2013 and in Italy for *Light up the Sky!* in 2006. He also has publishing agreements with international wind music publishers (USA: Alfred Music, BRS Music, Grand Mesa Music, TRN Music Publisher, Potenza Music and Leading Tones Music and in Germany: Carpe Diem Musikverlag).

### CROSSING THE BOSPORUS

Duration: 3:50

Originally  $\text{♩} = 100$  (for Wind Band)

Jukka Viitasaari

Piccolo

Flute 1

Flute 2

Oboe

Bassoon

B♭ Clarinet 1

B♭ Clarinet 2 & 3

B♭ Bass Clarinet

Alto Saxophone 1-2

Tenor Saxophone

Baritone Saxophone

B♭ Trumpet 1

B♭ Trumpet 2 & 3

French Horn 1-2

Trombone 1-2

Bass Trombone

Euphonium

Tuba

Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Marimba, Timpani, G-B, C-F

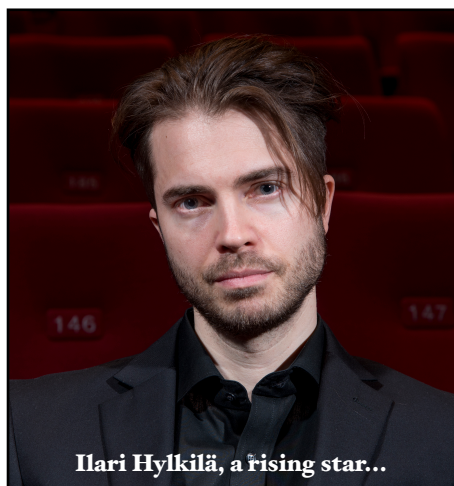
Percussion 1: Triangle, Finger Cym., Tambourine, Maracas

Percussion 2: Bongos, opt. Congas (Klong Yaw/Darbouka/Egyptian Tahls may be substituted)

Percussion 3: Crash Cym., Snr. Cym., Snare Drum, Bass Drum (Optional Drum Set)

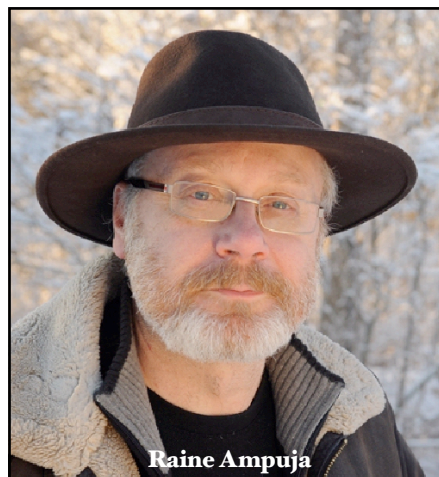
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Crossing the Bosphorus-GMM390 Copyright © 2017 by Grand Mesa Music Publishers Page 1



Ilari Hylkilä, a rising star...

Finland's most recent wind band music exports are *Metallfare* by **Ilari Hylkilä**, published by C. Alan in the USA in 2014, and *Vinjettejä Suomesta (Vignettes from Finland)*, a joint commission by the Finnish Navy Band and Georgia State University, premiered in Atlanta in spring 2015. Belgian publisher Hafabra Music has begun publishing the music of **Raine Ampuja**, the long-time chairman of SPOL.



Raine Ampuja

## A Shape of Finns to come - three decades or so of new Finnish wind band music



The late 1990's and early 2000's also saw the outmarch of several female wind band composers, most of whom were and still are very active youth band conductors.

**Anita Lehto's** euphonium solo *Sea Opens out from the Cliff* is a proven hit. An extensive output by **Marja Ikonen** culminates in the U.S. commissioned *A Day at the Lake*, a solo two junior trumpeteers. Sibelius Academy-educated conductor **Hanna-Mari Lehtonen** was the runner up in the Arizona State University 2018 Female Band Composition Competition with her piece *Through the Forest*. Her *Tango Corazon* (2019) has also performed widely in the U.S. as a Leading Tones Music publication. On a more demanding level, Riikka Talvitie, Lotta Wennäkoski and **Maria Kalaniemi** have proven their mettle.



With a population of only 5.4 million yet with almost 200 wind bands including six professional ensembles, Finland has produced an astounding volume of new and inventive wind band music over the past three decades, or so.



By **Kari Laitinen** (works at Music Finland as chief information manager, also an enthusiastic wind music historian)  
English translation by Jaakko Mäntyjärvi



## A Shape of Finns to come - three decades or so of new Finnish wind band music



**FinnBand Publishers**  
@finnbandpublishers5511 19 tilaajaa 23 videota  
Finnish band publishers united = FinnBand! >



Tilaa

ETUSIVU VIDEOT SOITTOLISTAT YHTEISÖ KANAVAT TIETOJA

Uusimmat Suositut



**Laulujen loimu (The Blaze of Songs) by Antti Nissilä (for wind band and choir or vocal...**  
455 katselukertaa • 1 vuosi sitten



**Saga Concert Band video**  
210 katselukertaa • 1 vuosi sitten



**Sonata (for symphonic band) by Jukka-Pekka Lehto**  
302 katselukertaa • 2 vuotta sitten



**Ciaccona (for symphonic band) by Jukka-Pekka Lehto**  
296 katselukertaa • 2 vuotta sitten



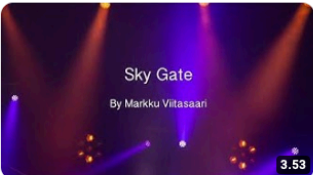
**Iloinen metsämies (The Merry Forester) for Youth Band by Janne Laine**  
328 katselukertaa • 2 vuotta sitten



**Fantasy Overture (for wind band) by Tero Lanu**  
811 katselukertaa • 2 vuotta sitten



**From Karelia With Love (for wind band) by Jyrki Koskinen**  
547 katselukertaa • 2 vuotta sitten



**Sky Gate (for wind band) by Markku Viitasaari**  
448 katselukertaa • 2 vuotta sitten



**Morning Call for bass-baritone and concert band (music by Antti Nissilä, lyrics by...**  
352 katselukertaa • 2 vuotta sitten



**Bold as Brass (for wind band) by Jukka Viitasaari**  
590 katselukertaa • 2 vuotta sitten



**ZEMBALOO (for wind band) by Ilari Hylkilä**  
424 katselukertaa • 3 vuotta sitten



**RUMBA (from The Great Wall of China) Einar Englund, arr. Elias Seppälä**  
614 katselukertaa • 3 vuotta sitten

FinnBand Publishers on YouTube: contemporary Finnish band music recorded by the Helsinki Police Symphonic Band.



## A Shape of Finns to come - three decades or so of new Finnish wind band music

### Links:

Finnish Windband Association SPOL (also on Facebook) [www.spolli.com](http://www.spolli.com)

Fennica Gehrman: <https://www.fennicagehrman.fi>

Blosari PDF-store [www.blosari.com/blosari](http://www.blosari.com/blosari)

Music Finland <http://musicfinland.fi/>

Music Ilari [www.ilarihylkila.com](http://www.ilarihylkila.com)

A-Minor Production <http://www.a-minor.fi/>

Noteline (you can find some Sibelius here) <http://www.noteline.fi>

STM <http://www.musiikkiliitto.fi/index.php/fi/nuotit>

Musact Oy <http://www.musact.net/>

### Picture credits:

Hanna-Mari Lehtonen pic by Photography Minna Paananen

Anita Lehto pic by Niklas Lehto

Marja Ikonen pic by Arto Pennanen

Jukka-Pekka Lehto pic by Timo Siren

Jukka Viitasaari pic by Janne Kaakinen

Raine Ampuja by Maarit Kytöharju

Ilari Hylkilä pic by Jaani Föhr

Pyynikin Puhaltajat pic by Tarja Reijonen

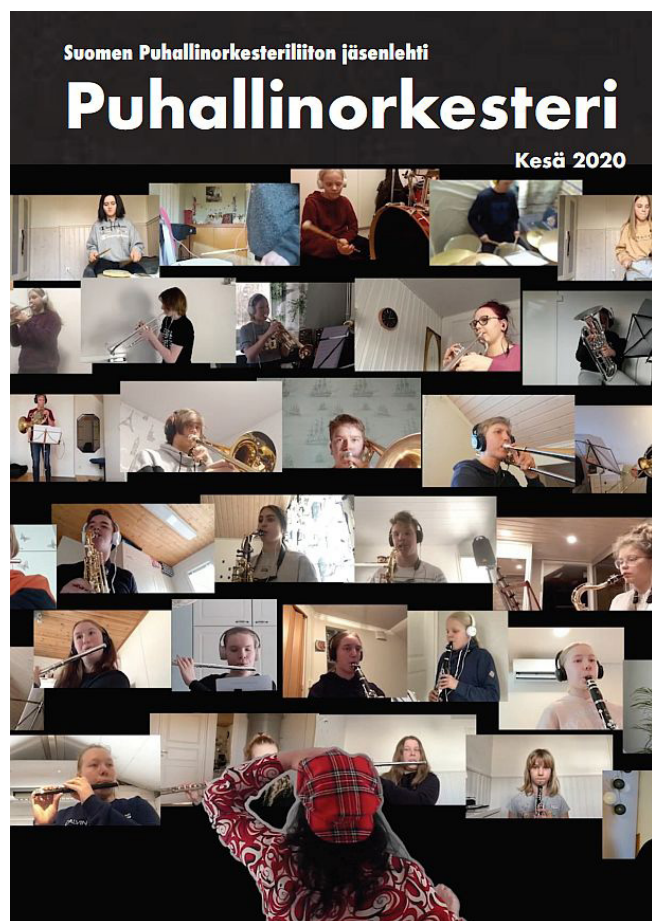
Helsinki Police Symphonic Band pic by Jukka Viitasaari

Timo Forsström pic by Maarit Kytöharju

Jukka Linkola pic by Saara Vuorjoki

### FINNISH BAND EXPERIENCE DURING LOCKDOWN

### WASBE World September 2020



Cover of SPOL's Summer 2020 Puhallinorkesteri issue, featuring the virtual concert of Eric Osterling's *Bandwagon March* by the Kotka and Hamina Youth Wind Band under the direction of Anne Kankare.

Among these was the use of different technological solutions as rehearsal aids. Could bands rehearse remotely? Could there be virtual concerts under a conductor's direction? Several Finnish bands experimented with these questions. A common first step was that conductors created digital playlists; players then obtained their parts from the band's online music archive, rehearsed them with guidance from the archive's MP3 or MIDI models, and self-recorded their own parts for each piece. These were then sent to the conductor or band's technician for synchronization and publication as virtual performances, sometimes even live-streamed with the sale of digital tickets.

The next step was testing whether a band could perform remotely under their director, with a full range of musical dynamics. Via such technical experiments, bands have been able to maintain their cohesion and improve their musical skills, revenue has been produced, publicity gained, and new techniques implemented, some of which will still be useful after 'normalcy' returns.

### Finland, Finnish Band Music, and the Wind Band Association (SPOL)

There are only 5.5 million Finns, but they are well-educated and technologically adept, with a strong and lively musical tradition. Finland has more than 200 registered wind bands, and countless septets, sextets, quintets, and other groups which perform regularly. There is a new generation