Jean Sibelius: Music of a Hero, Music of a Nation

YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONCERTS™ FOR SCHOOLS 2016
Resource Materials for Teachers
For generations, the New York Philharmonic has been transforming listeners through unforgettable Young People’s Concerts, master Teaching Artist workshops, enriching opportunities for young artists, and deeper understanding for audiences of all kinds. Today, the Orchestra remains at the forefront of education — with a global reach and a New York City focus. And the Young People’s Concerts for Schools are central to our partnerships with schools in New York City and beyond.

Teaching Artists of the New York Philharmonic are known around the world for creating indelible learning experiences through active engagement, sequential curriculum, and inspired performance. Their work has evolved over twenty years in New York City’s public schools, both during and after school. Through Philharmonic Schools, Teaching Artists use major orchestral repertoire to teach students and teachers how to listen, perform, and compose, preparing them to hear concerts in their own school and at the Philharmonic. Partner elementary schools in all five boroughs — a total of over 5,000 students — embrace music as an essential element of the classroom and the school community. Through Very Young Composers, students with or without musical background create, notate, and hear their very own music performed by Philharmonic musicians — often the full Orchestra — with the help of Philharmonic Teaching Artists serving as mentors and scribes. Multiple U.S. communities and foreign countries have established their own versions of Very Young Composers with assistance from the New York Philharmonic.

Since 1994, the New York Philharmonic has performed innovative, engaging concerts introducing young people to symphonic music. Young People’s Concerts™ explore real musical topics through repertory of all periods, including the newest works, for listeners 6-12 years old. Very Young People’s Concerts™ combine games, storytelling, and great music in one fun-filled hour to unlock children’s imagination and talent. The fun and learning continue at home through the Philharmonic’s award-winning website Kidzone!, a virtual world full of games and information designed for young browsers.

To learn more about these and the Philharmonic’s many other education programs, visit nyp hil.org/education, or go to Kidzone! at nyp hilkids.org to start exploring the world of orchestral music right now.

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**Young People’s Concerts for Schools**

**FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS**

**Teacher Workshop**
- Monday, November 9, 2015
- 4:00–6:00 p.m.

**Concert**
- Wednesday, January 20, 2016
- 12:00 p.m.

**FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

**Teacher Workshop**
- Tuesday, November 10, 2015
- 4:00–6:00 p.m.

**Concerts**
- Wednesday, January 20, 2016
- 10:30 a.m.
- Thursday, January 21, 2016
- 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

**FOR TEACHERS IN PHILHARMONIC SCHOOLS**

**Teacher Workshop**
- Thursday, November 12, 2015
- 4:00–6:00 p.m.

**Concerts**
- Thursday, January 21, 2016
- 10:30 a.m.
- Friday, January 22, 2016
- 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.
The Program

JOSHUA GERSEN  
conductor

TOM DULACK  
writer and director

THEODORE WIPRUD  
host

JEAN SIBELIUS  (1865-1957)  
Lemminkäinen’s Return from Lemminkäinen Suite, Op. 22 (1895)

JEAN SIBELIUS  
Selections from En saga, Op. 9 (1892)

VERY YOUNG COMPOSERS  
Selection of New Works from Finland and New York (2015)

ELIZABETH EGAN  
(age 16, New York Youth Symphony, The Juilliard Pre-College Division)  
Wanderlost

GAIVN HARRIS  
(age 11, P.S. 11)  
Rude Awakening

DEMECIS JUAREZ  
(age 10, P.S. 165)  
La Llorona

PYRY PAUNIO  
(age 12, Espoo Music Institute, Finland)  
Crossing the River Tuonela

RIMARI RANKIN  
(age 11, P.S. 59)  
The Hero’s Conquest

SEAVAR RODINE  
(age 12, P.S. 184)  
Tyr and Fennir

MONDRIANA VILLEAGS  
(age 12, M.S. 318; P.S. 11 graduate)  
Lightning, Seas and Deceased

JEAN SIBELIUS  
Finlandia, Op. 26 (1899)

THE PHILHARMONIC’S VERY YOUNG COMPOSERS

Created by the New York Philharmonic’s Jon Deak, Very Young Composers enables students with or without musical background to compose music to be performed by Philharmonic musicians. Very Young Composers serves fourth- and fifth-graders as an after-school program as part of Philharmonic Schools; middle-schoolers in the Composer’s Bridge program at David Geffen Hall; and children and teens in countries around the world where the program has been introduced. In every locale, Very Young Composers culminates in astonishing works revealing the power of children’s imaginations. Each year, over 100 new children’s compositions are played by ensembles of Philharmonic musicians — or by the full Orchestra at these Young People’s Concerts for Schools. For more information, visit nyphil.org/vyc.

A BRIDGE FOR YOUNG COMPOSERS

The Philharmonic’s Composer’s Bridge program is designed to empower middle school students interested in serious study of composition to make the transition to a variety of New York City programs. The Juilliard Pre-College Division offers small group composition classes for students of elementary through high school age who exhibit the talent, potential, and accomplishment to pursue a career in music. The New York Youth Symphony’s Composition Program is a series of workshops for young musicians to explore the world of composition, orchestration, and the musical thought of a wide variety of composers, with a focus on instrumentation and orchestration. Face the Music is the only student ensemble in New York City dedicated to performing music by living classical and jazz composers. Special Music School High School is the only public high school in the city offering a composition "major" for students passionate about expressing their unique creative voice. LaGuardia Arts specialized high school prepares students for professional careers in the arts and academic pursuits. To find out more about these programs, visit nyphil.org/vyc, www.juilliard.edu, www.nyyouthsymphony.org, www.kaufmanmusiccenter.org, and www.laguardiahs.org.

TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE ARTS

The Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts is a guide for arts educators in New York City public schools. The Music Blueprint defines five strands of learning, all addressed in these Materials for Teachers. In the course of these lessons, your students will make music, develop musical literacy, explore connections with other disciplines, get information about careers in music, and of course take advantage of an important community resource, the New York Philharmonic.

In keeping with key elements of the Common Core, the Young People’s Concert for Schools and these lessons provide a deep dive into a few related works. They foster close listening and citation of evidence, using music as the text. Through the modality of music, they reinforce habits of mind developed in ELA and math lessons, and offer connections with literary and historical texts.
Jean Sibelius: Music of a Hero, Music of a Nation

In order to think of themselves as a nation, a people need a mythology — a well of images, stories, and identity. The <i>Kalevala</i>, an epic poem compiled by Elias Lönnrot from Finland’s oral folklore and mythology, provided that for the Finns. When it was first published in 1835, the <i>Kalevala</i> spurred a movement that would lead to Finnish independence from Russia in 1917. A dawning sense of the worth of Finnish culture and language — something ancient and noble, not just the incomprehensible speech of a remote group of peasants in the Russian Empire — moved many to learn the language and celebrate the myths. Jean Sibelius, born in 1865, was one of these. Although his mother tongue was Swedish — Sweden had controlled Finland for centuries until 1809 — he began to learn Finnish in school. He learned about Finnish heroes and myths. He loved nature, spending his childhood walking along Finland’s coastline and in her forests. Originally aiming to be a concert violinist, young Sibelius also showed talent as a composer. He absorbed many influences living and studying in Berlin, Vienna, and other musical centers. But he found his first powerful musical inspirations in the <i>Kalevala</i>. His <i>Kullervo</i>, a tone poem based on a <i>Kalevala</i> hero and composed when Sibelius was in his late twenties, was an enormous success back home in Finland. During the next decade, he established his reputation with more orchestral music exploring Finnish myths and legends. Later, his fame spread internationally through his symphonies, which ring with his love of Nordic nature and folk music. Through his symphonies, which are abstract, without stories attached, Sibelius became a force in the evolution of 20th century music, a counterweight first to Gustav Mahler, and later to Arnold Schoenberg and his school of atonal composers. By the 1930s, Sibelius was among the most widely performed of living orchestra composers. Jean Sibelius’s close identification with Finnish landscapes, folk music, and myth, together with his worldwide standing, have made him a national hero. Until the adoption of the euro, Finnish currency bore his image — and a commemorative two-euro coin was minted in 2015 in his honor. The national conservatory is named for him. With his 150th birthday in December 2015, Sibelius celebrations are taking place not only in Finland but all over the world.

This year’s Young People’s Concerts for Schools focus on the first part of Sibelius’s career, from his works rooted in myth, to the music that most inflamed Finnish nationalism: his <i>Finlandia</i>, which on its premiere in 1899 became an anthem for those seeking independence for Finland. Learning about Sibelius and his music will give students from elementary to high school a powerful opportunity to consider how myths and heroes unite and inspire groups of people, and how music can propel social movements. The <i>Kalevala</i> itself — available in translations for young readers — offers a wealth of verbal texts to place alongside Sibelius’s music for deeper exploration. Any number of other books, not to mention movies, provide infinite hero examples.

By dramatizing the tales of Finland’s ancient heroes, Jean Sibelius became a hero himself to a people just discovering a bright future. Nearly 100 years since Finnish Independence, and exactly 150 years from the birth of this great composer, these Young People’s Concerts invite you and your students into a dramatic story that reverberates in the lives of people the world over.

Music of a Hero, Music of a Nation

Concert Submissions

The New York Philharmonic wants to make your students’ take on Jean Sibelius: Music of a Hero, Music of a Nation part of your Young People’s Concert.

- **Show Us a Hero!** Make a picture of a mythical hero, yourself or someone you know as a hero, or specifically Lemminkäinen in heroic action. See Unit 3 Activity 1 (page 10) for more background.
- **Sing Us an Anthem!** As a class, create a short anthem for a cause that students are passionate about — then videotape a performance. See Unit 4 Activity 3 (page 21) for more background.

Selected pictures and videos will be shown on the big screen at the concert. Visit nyphil.org/ypcschools and click on “Concert Submissions” to fill out a submission form, including permission to exhibit the video, and directions for uploading your video file or images.

Finland is a small country — it has about 5.5 million people, about two-thirds as many people as New York City, spread across a land area almost the size of California. But the Finns have a distinctive language and culture, different from the other Nordic countries. And they are a mighty country in terms of design and culture — especially music. An astonishing proportion of the world’s composers, conductors, and soloists come from Finland, as do many innovations in technology and social media. The 150th birthday of Finland’s most important composer, Jean Sibelius, is a good time for students to learn about this small but highly influential nation.
Activity 1: Getting to Know Finland

Begin with a three-way chart labeled: I know/I think I know/I want to know. Have students brainstorm what they know, may know, and want to know to establish their level of knowledge about Finland. For example, “I know it’s part of Scandinavia/I think they have sun all summer/I want to know about the aurora borealis.”

Using maps and online resources, explore the people, geography, and history of Finland. Check out the kid-friendly website: www.timeforkids.com/finland.

**Elementary Extensions**

**Look at nature symbols**
Many countries use an animal or bird to represent their country, but Finland has seven national nature symbols! Have students research and create collages of Finland’s deep social and spiritual connections to nature: 1) whooper swan 2) lily of the valley 3) brown bear 4) silver birch 5) ladybug 6) granite 7) humback perch.

**Explore textile design**
Show students the work of Marimekko, a prominent Finnish design company. Get the students inspired to create a textile design after their own, nature-inspired works. They can choose plants, animals, rocks, fish, or trees and make a repeating pattern to express their own love of nature.

**Helsinki’s trees play music**
To celebrate Sibelius’s 150th birthday anniversary, Helsinki has placed QR codes around trees to play his music (Sibelius, a nature lover, composed piano pieces for the spruce, pine, birch, aspen, and rowan trees). Check it out! Go to nyphil.org/ypcschools/sibelius and click on “Helsinki’s Trees.”

**Middle and High School Extensions**

**Connect to technology**
- The technology industry is the most important export industry in Finland today. Finland’s technology companies operate worldwide, with operations constituting over 50% of all Finnish exports. Angry Birds is a video game franchise created by Finnish computer game developer Rovio Entertainment. Have students research why Finland is such a leader in technology and explore what sets this country apart from others.
- Have students research their own “Fun Facts” about Finland and Sibelius and turn them into their own QR codes using the website: https://www.the-qrcode-generator.com. (See Elementary Extension Ideas for more on the Helsinki celebration with QR codes). Students can create their own scavenger hunt by placing QR codes around the classroom or school, or post questions with QR code answers.

**Connect to weather and geography**
Because of its geographic location with a latitude and longitude of 64° 00’ N and 26° 00’ E, Finland is subject to a sub-arctic weather; however the climate is typically temperate because of the presence of the warm North Atlantic Current near its coast. Have students:
- Explore the weather in Finland and research how this unusual climate affects the culture: Do people live differently because of the weather conditions?
- Study and discuss the effects of global warming on Finland and the other countries that are part of the Arctic Circle: Are they concerned about rising sea levels?

**Activity 2: Who Was Jean Sibelius?**

Share some facts with your students about composer Jean Sibelius. As the students hear or read these, have them compare themselves to Sibelius by keeping track of what’s the same, similar, or different.

**He was born on December 8:**
in the year 1865, exactly 150 years ago!

**He changed his first name:**
he was born with the name “Janne,” pronounced yon, but changed it to the French version “Jean,” pronounced zha[n], like his uncle.

**He grew up being surrounded by women and girls:**
after his father died, his mother and sister Linda moved in with his grandfather – and later, he and his wife had six children, all girls!

**He admired and loved his uncle:**
he gave him a violin when he was 10 years old.

**He had a mean aunt:**
she taught him the piano – sticking him with needles for wrong notes!

**He loved being outdoors in nature:**
he especially looked forward to his school vacations on the coast.

**He loved to use his imagination with his music:**
he would crawl under the piano when his mother played and think about the music, colors, and patterns.

**He enjoyed books, mathematics, plants, and drawing:**
and was often punished in school for daydreaming!

**He had to learn a new language:**
he started life speaking Swedish, but when he was nine, switched to a school that was taught in Finnish.

**He worked very hard at music:**
he became an excellent violinist.

**He grew up to be a famous composer:**
he composed seven symphonies, many tone poems, chamber music, and a very famous violin concerto.

**He became very well known in his country:**
there is a music college in Finland named after him, called the Sibelius Academy.

**He lived a long life:**
he died in 1957 at the age of 91.

**This year he has a big birthday!**
People all over the world are celebrating Sibelius and his music to mark the 150th anniversary of his birth.

**Elementary Extensions**
Sing “Happy Birthday” in Finnish
Learn the Finnish version of “Happy Birthday to You” (Päijön onnea vaan, Päijön onnea vaan, Päijön onnea vaan! Go to nyphil.org/ypcschools/sibelius and click on “Happy Birthday in Finnish” for an audio file.

Make your own “tree” for Sibelius
Just as Helsinki is dedicating its trees to Sibelius’s music, have students draw images from Sibelius’s life or designs inspired by Finnish folk art, nature, or mythology on paper that will then be rolled into a cylinder to be the “trunk.” Search images for “cardboard cylinder totem pole” for more ideas.
Money troubles plagued Sibelius all of his life, due to his poor management and difficulty with his publishers. These financial issues caused a great strain on his marriage. In 1913 Horatio Parker of Yale sent him three poems to set to songs. Following this, he was commissioned by Carl and Ellen Stoeckel (who ran the Norfolk Music Festival) to write a short orchestral work. Sibelius composed *The Oceanides* and traveled to America to conduct the premiere, to great acclaim. He was wined and dined as a celebrity and given an Honorary Doctorate at Yale. He even traveled to Niagara Falls! There were plans for him to return to America the following year for a concert tour. Sibelius believed this might finally be his opportunity to wipe his debts away and be a celebrated composer, but something happened on his way home that changed his life course, and the course of history. Archduke Ferdinand and his wife Sophie were assassinated in Sarajevo. Five weeks later, World War I began.

Middle and High School Extensions

**Explore imagination and fantasy**

Sibelius grew up surrounded by women after the death of his father. His mother is said to have been somewhat cold and undemonstrative and some believe this could be the reason he was of a “dreamy, intermittently remote nature.” He had a great imagination and sense of fantasy, which we see in his drawings and in stories of his youth—and, of course, his music.

Have students discuss a fantasy they have had (flying, being a hero, becoming a sports star, being a great artist, saving the world, etc.), or have them collaborate with a partner or small group. Explore how fantasies help us escape our own world when it is unpleasant or scary. How do fantasies help us as artists to be creative and bring new ideas, sounds, and art work to life? How can we turn fantasies into achievable goals? Have students draw a picture of themselves doing something amazing—flying, walking on water, being bigger than life, or smaller than a bug, to save others.

**Consider world and political events**

We are all affected by world events, though sometimes we do not realize the long term impact of something that happens in a far-away land. Discuss the following excerpt with students and have them reflect on today’s world events: what may be making an impact on their life now, and what may cause issues in their future?

In his score, Sibelius outlined the story: “Exhausted after a long series of wars and battles, Lemminkäinen decides to return home. He transforms his cares and worries into war horses and sets off. After a voyage that is rich in adventure, he finally arrives in his native land, where he rediscovers the places that are so full of childhood memories.”
Activity 1: Finland’s Kalevala and the Lemminkäinen Legend

Start a discussion about myths and legends: What do you know about legends? Where do they come from? How do they get spread? What myths or legends do you know? What mythical stories have been passed down in your culture? What legendary stories exist in your family? If you had to create a legend about the history of your school or neighborhood, what would you make up?

Lemminkäinen was inspired by Finland’s myths and legends found within the book known as the Kalevala. The Kalevala is a collection of Finland’s ancient poems and cultural myths about creation, nature, gods, and heroes. Until a scholar in 1835 collected and compiled the stories as a work of epic poetry, these poems, known as runes, had been passed along through oral tradition – sung by runic singers who were traditionally designated as the song-story tellers of each village. Unraveling and publishing a cultural mythology in this way helped enable the Finns to think of themselves as a nation – an important symbol for a people ruled and oppressed by foreigners. One of the great heroes in the Kalevala is called Lemminkäinen, a young warrior. Share a version of this legend with your students:

Lemminkäinen was a young Finnish warrior who left home searching for great adventures and sailed the high seas for many years. On one voyage he traveled to a magical island and fell in love with a beautiful princess. To win her hand in marriage, he had to perform a series of dangerous tasks such as capturing a fire-breathing horse and traveling to Tuonela — the kingdom of death — to slay the mystical, singing swan that guarded the kingdom’s entrance. Lemminkäinen finally returned home to Finland, riding a majestic horse, as a great hero.

Elementary Extensions

Read a children’s book inspired by the Kalevala

Louhi, Witch of North Farm: A Story from Finland’s Epic Poem ‘The Kalevala,’ by Toni de Gerez and Barbara Conroy (Puffin, 1988). This book about returning the stolen sun and moon helps students understand that oral poetry was a central part of Finnish people’s lives, especially during the long and dark winters. The Canine Kalevala, by Mauri Kunnas (Otava, 1992), gives a humorous spin to the retelling by casting dogs and cats in the leading roles.

Elementary, Middle, and High School Extensions

Write your own myth

Ancient cultures used myths to explain the origins of the world and natural events such as thunderstorms, earthquakes, volcanoes, tidal waves, and the changing of the seasons. They rooted in the beliefs of a culture and took place before recorded time. Here are some guidelines students can use to write their own myth:

- Consider what your myth will explain. Something from nature? A lesson or moral for humankind?
- Set your myth in the past before written history, or in a far-away land.
- Create a hero or main character — a hero with a flaw. Consider adding others as your story progresses.
- Map out your hero’s story — what lesson(s) do they need to learn? Why are they on this journey? What obstacles do they face? How do they overcome them?
- Involve something that doesn’t happen in the real world and use creative, magical ideas. Remember, anything can happen!
- Think about what question your myth resolves. Is the story relevant in life today?

Study the Finnish gods to inspire students to write their own myth or legend

Visit nyphil.org/ypcschools/sibelius and click on “Finnish Gods” for a resource. Visit www.gutenberg.org and search “Kalevala” to read a complete translation, or “Finnish Legends” for versions of the Kalevala for young people. High school students can still use children’s stories to analyze sophisticated literary elements of character, setting, and conflict. Lemminkäinen’s Return is based loosely on Runo 30 from the Kalevala.

Middle and High School Extensions

Hear the Kalevala and runic singing

Play excerpts of a radio piece by Ellen Kushner that explores the Kalevala and its singing style of storytelling: visit nyphil.org/ycpschools/sibelius and click on “Kalevala Kushner.”

Analyze stories of the Kalevala

Visit www.gutenberg.org and search “Kalevala” to read a complete translation, or “Finnish Legends” for versions of the Kalevala for young people. High school students can still use children’s stories to analyze sophisticated literary elements of character, setting, and conflict. Lemminkäinen’s Return is based loosely on Runo 30 from the Kalevala.

Activity 2: Exploring Motor Rhythms

One of the ways Sibelius creates drama and excitement in his music is by using the energy of motor rhythms – repetitive, fast figures that support a melody and keep it running. By dividing a beat into smaller, faster segments, more musical drive and energy can be achieved.

Teach your students to speak three speeds of rhythm, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rhythm 1</th>
<th>Rhythm 2</th>
<th>Rhythm 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Go!”</td>
<td>“Run, run!”</td>
<td>“Chugga-chugga!”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Help your students practice repeating the three rhythms by holding 1, 2, or 3 fingers to indicate the rhythm they should chant. Once comfortable, play a game in which the students chant and pass one of the rhythms around a circle (one by one), watching for the change signal you give with your fingers (1, 2, or 3). Try to keep at a steady beat and don’t go too fast.

Once the students have a confident handle on it, try another challenge by splitting them into boys and girls (or two other types of groups) and having one group say a rhythm while the other has a “Chugga-chugga” rhythm. Keep adding on to see how far they can get, but keeping the goal to have a constant motor of Chugga-chugga happening throughout. For example:

Listen to a few of excerpts from Lemminkäinen’s Return and discuss the following:

What do you notice about the way Sibelius uses motor rhythms here? How does each section still sound different? What do motor rhythms do for a piece of music?

Middle and High School Extensions

Motor rhythms in ensemble settings

Incorporate different rhythms and motor rhythms into scale warm-ups, as well as the idea of alternating and passing parts around the ensemble. Additionally, small groups can experiment with writing motor rhythm accompaniments for melodies extracted from your own concert repertoire; the deepened awareness of pulse and subdivision may prove particularly beneficial for correcting sections in which the students tend to rush during performance.
Activity 3: Learning Rhythms in Lemminkäinen’s Return (15 Minutes)

Sibelius uses four core rhythms in this movement for both accompaniment and melodic/thematic material. (Note that some of these motives develop throughout the movement, but these are the basic rhythms.) They are as follows:

- Rhythm A: proud, bold
- Rhythm B: galloping, hurried
- Rhythm C: angry, energized
- Rhythm D: bouncy, joyous

Teach your students to clap the rhythms and describe the feel or character of each, making them as distinct as possible. For example:

- Rhythm A: proud, bold
- Rhythm B: galloping, hurried
- Rhythm C: angry, energized
- Rhythm D: bouncy, joyous

Once confident, see if your students can match each rhythm to the following melodic themes, which have been transposed for playing on recorders:

Discuss: How does each rhythm sound now that it also has pitches? Does the feeling or character change? How would you imagine it sounding when played by different instruments of the orchestra?

Activity 4: Guided Listening to Lemminkäinen’s Return (15 Minutes)

Sibelius valued the Kalevala for its atmospheric qualities rather than the explicit points of narrative and said, “Its story is far less important than the moods and atmospheres conveyed.” Because he constructed the musical narrative with this in mind, listeners can release their imagination to create images and moods of Lemminkäinen, as the music moves them.

Play the following Lemminkäinen excerpts and encourage students to imagine a scene or atmosphere that relates to their own imagined version of the Lemminkäinen story:

- Excerpt 1 (Track 12)
- Excerpt 2 (Track 13)
- Excerpt 3 (Track 14)
- Excerpt 4 (Track 15)

Play some orchestral excerpts that showcase these rhythms in Lemminkäinen’s Return:

- Rhythm A: Ex. 1 (Track 7), Ex. 2 (Track 8)
- Rhythm B: (Track 9)
- Rhythm C: (Track 10)
- Rhythm D: (Track 11)
All the pieces on this year’s concert are “tone poems” — works that are meant to evoke a mood or story. Twenty-one years after the premiere of *En saga*, Sibelius explained, “*En saga*’s music depicts basic moods and — why not — different phases of a saga to which everybody can write poetic ‘content.’” Sibelius later issued a statement about *En saga* to be shared only after his death: “*En saga* is, psychologically speaking, one of my most profound works. I could almost say it encompasses my entire youth. It is an expression of a certain state of mind. When I composed it, I had undergone many shattering experiences. In no other work have I revealed myself so completely.”

### Activity 1: Exploring the Idea of Epic Story

*En saga* translates as ‘saga’ or ‘epic’ in English. Introduce your students to the concept of an epic — a long poem, book, or story that chronicles the sometimes complicated, journey of a hero and adventures over a long period of time. Lead a brainstorm of topics or elements suitable for such epic stories. What stories can you think of that might qualify as an epic? If you were to create your own epic, who would you make as the hero? What kinds of adventures would he or she go on? What would make the character heroic?

**Elementary Extensions**
- Read about epics or heroes
- Explore epic stories from other cultures. Read children’s book versions of *The Odyssey*, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, or *The Song of Hiawatha.*

**Middle and High School Extensions**
- **Music for an epic**
  - Epics are well represented in movie theaters today, and their soundtracks play an important role in sustaining excitement and adventure over the course of hours! Think of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *Star Wars*, and *Harry Potter*. The programmatic musical style of Sibelius’s *En saga* bears similarities to the compositions of film composers today. Works by composer John Williams (*Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, *Superman*), and Canadian composer Howard Shore (*Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*), are often very reminiscent of the late-19th century’s large-scale Romantic orchestral music.
  - After listening to *En saga*, have students pick a favorite piece of music from one of the movies listed above and compare it with the orchestral style of Sibelius. Guide students’ listening to notice changing rhythmic structures, tempo changes, use of instruments, etc. as the musical story evolves. Ask: What is the composer telling us with his use of melodic line, rhythms, instrumentation, tempo, dynamics, etc.? Use a Venn diagram to keep track of similarities and differences.
  - Ask students to write or choose preexisting music for an episode from their own life: What type of music would best paint a picture of your experience?

### Concert Submission

*Be a part of the Young People’s Concerts for Schools*

*Show Us a Hero!*
- Draw pictures of a mythical hero, yourself or someone you know as a hero, or specifically Lemminkäinen in heroic action. Consider what kind of hero and picture would send an important message for people to think about.
- Please encourage students to think imaginatively and avoid submitting pictures of preexisting comic book heroes.
- See details about submitting your Concert Submissions on page 4.
Throughout _En saga_, Sibelius combined elements of both Finnish folk music and classical music from the Romantic era. The result is a style unique to Sibelius and perfect for creating a grand and heroic quality for a musical epic. Guide your students to explore these musical features through listening, or creating their own short compositional projects.

**Rhythm**

_En saga_ is infused with a dotted rhythm pattern that some believe may be attributed to Sibelius’s intense interest in Bizet’s _Carmen_, which features this same rhythm in its famous habanera. However, Sibelius transforms it into a more Nordic-sounding dance, and sometimes, a gesture that is much more bold and powerful.

**Dotted rhythm pattern:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example 1 (Track 16)</th>
<th>Example 2 (Track 17)</th>
<th>Example 3 (Track 18)</th>
<th>Example 4 (Track 19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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**Dynamics**

Like other composers of the Romantic era, Sibelius was expanding the orchestra’s dynamic range to create more intense expression and contrasts, and to accentuate climactic moments, all which typify Romantic ideals.

**Dramatic dynamics:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Example 1 (Track 20)</th>
<th>Example 2 (Track 21)</th>
<th>Example 3 (Track 22)</th>
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</table>

**Syncopation**

To accompany the theme of the 1st violins and violas, Sibelius has the remaining strings punch out a syncopated (off the beat) pattern, giving it a peasant-like feel with great force and weight.

**Syncopated accompaniment:**

(Track 23)

Reflect and discuss: How can these forces interact to create the dramatic qualities of Sibelius’s music?

Sibelius composed four main themes (melodies) for his musical epic. These themes build and vary as the piece develops. Teach your students to sing or play each of them (“Some have been transposed or simplified.”) After listening, reflect on the instruments, musical qualities, and emotions expressed in each.

The main theme of _En saga_ emerges from the glistening strings background, and is announced by the cellos and horns:

**Theme 1:**

(Track 24)

This theme is transformed throughout the piece. Here are two other versions:

**Theme 1: brass tutti**

(Track 25)

**Theme 1: clarinet solo**

(Track 26)

The second theme is introduced by the clarinets and violins and is quicker and more insistent:

**Theme 2**

(Track 27)

The violas play the third theme with an agitated rhythm:

**Theme 3**

(Track 28)

Finally, the strings present a heavy, confident melody for the fourth theme:

**Theme 4**

(Track 29)
Activity 4: Imagining Epic Scenes and Story

Play the entire 7-minute concert version of En saga for your students.

En saga
(Track 2)

On a first listening, have the students capture some of the music’s details on a timeline.
For example:

- beginning section
- after beginning
- middle
- almost the end
- final section

Guided by their musical noticings, have your students listen again, but draw or write their own scene(s) or narrative.

Discuss and reflect: What makes this music sound big, epic, or heroic? What kind of journey does Sibelius take you on as you listen to his music? What kind of scenes or characters do you imagine?

Elementary Extensions

Look at inspiring art
Many historians believe that Sibelius’s interest in the paintings of artist Arnold Böcklin – a Swiss artist who painted many mythological subjects – inspired his piece En saga. Sibelius admiringly described Böcklin’s symbolist paintings by saying that “he paints air that is too clear, swans that are too white, and sea that is too blue...” Search the web and view some of Böcklin’s works. Additionally, Sibelius’s artist friend Akseli Gallen-Kallela was then inspired by En saga and painted a picture titled Sibelius Sadun säveltäjänä (“Sibelius as the Composer of ‘En saga’”).

Sibelius composed Finlandia in 1899 during a time of great social and political unrest for Finland under Russian rule. Czar Nicolas II was censoring their press and drafting Finns into the Russian military. Along with other local artists of the day, Sibelius joined in protest and composed Finlandia (originally Finland Awakes) as part of a series of tableaus depicting events from Finnish history. Sibelius had to use different titles to disguise the piece in subsequent performances, to avoid censorship from Russian authorities.
Culture is made up of the values, beliefs, underlying assumptions, attitudes, and behaviors shared by a group of people. This also includes artwork, music, and other symbols that unite a community. Have students explore these ideas around them. Discuss: What gives you pride in your own school or community? What are the symbols that evoke pride – flags, school colors, school song, school mascot, sports teams (school or professional)? Do they have a specific uniform (marching band, dance team, sports jersey) that makes them feel proud and part of a larger community? How does this help unite people?

Sibelius was deeply connected to Finland and his country’s struggle for independence. Guide your students to explore ideas of national pride and identity through discussion questions such as: What do you love about your home country? What are some things about your country that give you a sense of pride? What are some struggles people have in your country? What things would you change if you could? Discuss things the people of Finland have to feel proud about today. (See Unit 1 for activities to explore present-day Finland.)

Finland had been ruled for centuries by Sweden and then was controlled by Russia from 1809 until finally declaring its independence in 1917. Life under Russian rule was particularly difficult and fueled much of Sibelius’s identity as a Finnish composer. Ask your students to imagine and journal about what life might have been like for Sibelius, Finnish children, Finnish families, etc.

Play a recording of the U.S. national anthem, The Star-Spangled Banner, and ask your students to think about its musical qualities: What feelings does it try to evoke? What are the rhythms like? How is the melody shaped? Where’s the strongest part? When is it more humble?

Using classroom instruments, have groups of students create short anthems that are written for a cause they are passionate about. Writing a short stanza of lyrics may be helpful, but is not necessary. Students should decide on the type of feelings they’d like to evoke in listeners (pride, humility, strength, calm, etc.) and choose musical elements to match those intentions.

Elementary Extensions

Compare national anthems

Check out anthems of other countries in a setting your students may encounter in their lives, including videos of Olympic medal ceremonies.

Listen to other types of songs that engender feelings of pride or strength

Share folk anthems such as Woody Guthrie’s “This Land Is Your Land” or Elgar’s Pomp and Circumstance march.
Activity 4: Learning to Sing the Finlandia Anthem (20 Minutes)

In the middle of his Finlandia, Sibelius writes a hymn which has become an anthem for the people of Finland. Lyrics were later added and the following lyrics condense several verses into an English singing translation. Introduce them to your students and discuss the ideas relating to Finland’s long-awaited freedom from Russia:

Finland, behold, your daylight now is dawning.
Finland, arise, and lift your head up high.
The skylark calls across the light of morning,
We hear its song from high up in the sky.
No more oppressed, a nation now is forming,
Your morning’s come, O Finland of ours!

Once comfortable, teach your students one or two parts of the hymn to sing along with the New York Philharmonic at this year’s Young People’s Concert!

Finlandia

| Melody demo (Track 31) | Harmony demo (Track 32) | Piano accompaniment (Track 33) | Voices with piano accompaniment (Track 34) |

Elementary Extensions

Explore national symbols
Just as Finlandia has become a national symbol of Finland, research another national symbol, such as the history of the Finnish flag.

Middle and High School Extensions

Perform Finlandia
There are many arrangements of Finlandia for various levels of concert bands and string orchestras that can be used to introduce your ensembles to the music of Sibelius. These can be found with a quick search on the internet.
Play the following excerpts of Finlandia for your students and guide them in listening and discussing the musical details they hear, as well as the connections to Finland’s journey of independence and national pride.

### Activity 5: Listening for Character and Tone in Finlandia (15 Minutes)

#### Section 1
(Track 35) The piece begins with a low introduction from the brass and timpani. This music is actually a quote from a piece entitled “Arise, Finland!” which was written by Emil Genetz in 1881. The grave melody projects a sense of the struggle and yearning for independence.

#### Section 2
(Track 36) A serene woodwind chorale is followed by serious, proud music in the strings. Eventually, the brass join in to create a sense of growing strength. Distant rumblings in the timpani pervade throughout.

#### Section 3
(Track 37) The tempo becomes fast, and rapid-fire bursts from the trumpets convey a sense of conflict. The strings develop the “Arise, Finland!” melody.

#### Section 4
(Track 38) The key changes from minor to major to convey a sense of triumph, even though the “battle” and “struggle” music continues. Cymbals and triangle add color.

#### Section 5
(Track 39) A woodwind chorale enters with a famous, hymn-like anthem. Sibelius’s melody has since received dozens of settings. In addition to serving as the melody for numerous patriotic Finnish anthems, this tune also became the Protestant hymn, “Be Still, My Soul.”

#### Section 6
(Track 40) Sibelius revisits the triumphant music and closes the piece with one last statement of the anthem by the brass.

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### How to Have a Great Day at the Philharmonic

#### Before You Come...
- Leave food, drink, candy, and gum behind — avoid the rush at the trash cans!
- Leave your backpack at school, too — why be crowded in your seat?
- Go to the bathroom at school — so you won’t have to miss a moment of the concert!

#### When You Arrive...
- Ushers will show your group where to sit. Your teachers and chaperones will sit with you.
- Settle right in and get comfortable! Take off your coat and put it right under your seat.
- If you get separated from your group, ask an usher to help you.

#### On Stage...
- The orchestra will gather on stage before your eyes.
- The concertmaster enters last — the violinist who sits at the conductor’s left hand side. Quiet down right away, because this is when the players tune their instruments. It’s a magical sound signaling the start of an orchestra concert.
- Then the conductor will walk on. You can clap, then get quiet and listen for the music to begin.
- Each piece has loud parts and quiet parts. How do you know when it ends? Your best bet is to watch the conductor. When he turns around toward the audience, then that piece is over and you can show your appreciation by clapping.

#### Listening Closely...
- Watch the conductor and see whether you can figure out which instruments will play by where he is pointing or looking.
- See if you can name which instruments are playing by how they sound.
- Listen for the melodies and try to remember one you’ll be able to hum later. Then try to remember a second one. Go for a third?
- If the music were the soundtrack of a movie, what would the setting be like? Would there be a story?
- Pick out a favorite moment in the music to tell your family about later. But keep your thoughts to yourself at the concert — let your friends listen in their own ways.
The New York Philharmonic is by far the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States, and one of the oldest in the world. It was founded in 1842 by a group of local musicians, and currently plays about 180 concerts every year. On May 5, 2010, the Philharmonic gave its 15,000th concert – a record that no other symphony orchestra in the world has ever reached. The Orchestra currently has 106 members. It performs mostly at David Geffen Hall, at Lincoln Center, but also tours around the world. The Orchestra’s first concerts specifically for a younger audience were organized by Theodore Thomas for the 1885–86 season, with a series of 24 “Young People’s Matinees.” The programs were developed further by conductor Josef Stransky, who led the first Young People’s Concert in January of 1914. The Young People’s Concerts were brought to national attention in 1924 by “Uncle Ernest” Schelling, and were made famous by Leonard Bernstein in the 1960s with live television broadcasts. Today’s New York Philharmonic offers a wide array of educational programs to families, schools, and adults, both live and online.

Meet the Artists

Joshua Gersen, music director of the New York Youth Symphony since September 2012, began his tenure as New York Philharmonic Assistant Conductor in September 2015. A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, he studied conducting with Otto-Werner Mueller. He recently finished his tenure as the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation Conducting Fellow of the New World Symphony, where he served as the assistant conductor to artistic director Michael Tilson Thomas, and led the orchestra in subscription, education, and family concerts, including the orchestra’s renowned PULSE concert series. Mr. Gersen made his conducting debut with the San Francisco Symphony in the fall of 2013 and has worked with that ensemble numerous times, including filling in for Michael Tilson Thomas on part of a subscription series and leading a January 2015 program in the new SoundBox Theater. Joshua Gersen was the principal conductor of the Ojai Music Festival in 2013; has conducted the Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, and Jacksonville symphony orchestras; and has served as a cover conductor for the Los Angeles Philharmonic and many other orchestras throughout the United States. He is a recipient of the 2010 Robert Harth Prize and 2011 Aspen Conducting Prize from the Aspen Summer Festival, where he served as assistant conductor in the summer of 2012.

Tom Dulack is an award-winning playwright, novelist, and director, whose new play, The Road to Damascus, opened Off-Broadway in 2015. His play Incommunicado won a Kennedy Center Prize for New American Drama, and Friends Like These won the Kaufman and Hart Prize for New American Comedy. Among his other plays, which have appeared on and Off-Broadway as well as in leading regional theaters around the country, are Breaking Legs, Diminished Capacity, Francis, York Beach, Just Deserts, Solomon’s Child, 1348, Shooting Craps, The Elephant, and Mrs. Rossetti. His novels include The Stigmata of Dr. Constantine and the forthcoming The Misanthropes. He is also the author of the theatrical memoir In Love With Shakespeare. He has written and directed the scripts for the New York Philharmonic Young People’s Concerts since 2005. He is also professor of English Literature at the University of Connecticut.

Theodore Wiprud, Vice President, Education, The Sue B. Mercy Chair, has overseen the New York Philharmonic’s wide range of in-school programs, educational concerts, adult programs, and online offerings since 2004. He hosts the Young People’s Concerts and the Young People’s Concerts for Schools. Previous to his tenure at the New York Philharmonic, Mr. Wiprud created educational and community-based programs at the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, and the American Composers Orchestra and worked as a teaching artist and resident composer in a number of New York City Schools. Earlier, he directed national grant-making programs at Meet the Composer, Inc. An active composer, Mr. Wiprud holds degrees from Harvard and Boston universities and studied at Cambridge University as a visiting scholar.
JEAN SIBELIUS (1865–1957)
1. Lemminkäinen’s Return from Lemminkäinen Suite, Op. 22
2. En saga, Op. 9
3. Finlandia, Op. 26

TEACHING EXCERPTS
Unit 2: Lemminkäinen’s Return
4. Motor rhythms 1
5. Motor rhythms 2
6. Motor rhythms 3
7. Rhythm A, example 1
8. Rhythm A, example 2
9. Rhythm B
10. Rhythm C
11. Rhythm D
12. Excerpt 1
13. Excerpt 2
14. Excerpt 3
15. Excerpt 4

Unit 3: En saga
16. Dotted rhythm, example 1
17. Dotted rhythm, example 2
18. Dotted rhythm, example 3
19. Dotted rhythm, example 4
20. Dynamics, example 1
21. Dynamics, example 2
22. Dynamics, example 3
23. Syncopated accompaniment
t
24. Theme 1
25. Theme 1: brass tutti
26. Theme 1: clarinet solo
27. Theme 2
28. Theme 3
29. Theme 4

Unit 4: Finlandia
30. John Stafford Smith: The Star-Spangled Banner
31. Melody demo
32. Harmony demo
33. Piano accompaniment
34. Voices with piano accompaniment
35. Section 1
36. Section 2
37. Section 3
38. Section 4
39. Section 5
40. Section 6

LEARN FINNISH
41. “Hello!” (Hei!)
42. “My name is…” (Nimeni on…)
43. “Thank you” (Kiitos)
44. “Finland” (Suomi)
45. “Happy birthday, Jean Sibelius!”
(Hyvää syntymäpäivää, Jean Sibelius!)

CD CREDITS
Tracks 1 and 4–15
SIBELIUS: Lemminkäinen’s Return from
Lemminkäinen Suite, Op. 22
New York Philharmonic; Neeme Järvi, conductor

Tracks 2 and 16–29
SIBELIUS: En saga, Op. 9
New York Philharmonic; Sir Colin Davis, conductor

Tracks 3 and 35–40
SIBELIUS: Finlandia, Op. 26
New York Philharmonic; Leonard Bernstein, conductor

Track 30
SMITH: The Star-Spangled Banner
New York Philharmonic; Leonard Bernstein, conductor

Tracks 31–34
Bethany Fiom, voice
Megan Lemley, voice
Jihea Hong Park, piano

Tracks 41–45
Ulla-Maija Sutinen, from the Consulate General of Finland
in New York

IMAGES
Cover
Akseli Gallen-Kallela,
“Kullervo Rides to War” (1899)

Page 9
Ben Garrison,
“The Swan of Tuonela” (2011)

Page 14
Akseli Gallen-Kallela,
“Clouds Above a Lake” (1906)