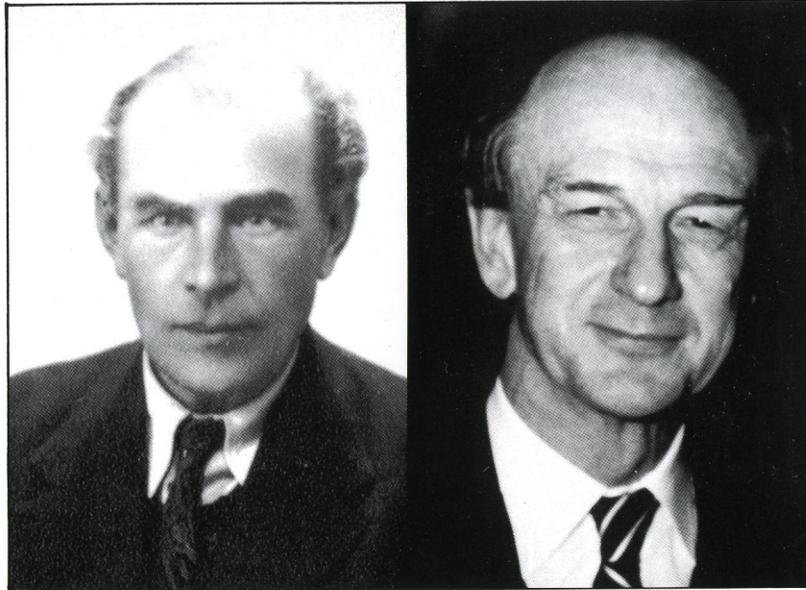


Chandos

CHAN 8525



HEINO ELLER

KALJO RAID

© 1987 Chandos Records Ltd. © 1987 Chandos Records Ltd.
Printed in West Germany / Imprimé en Allemagne
CHANDOS RECORDS LTD, LONDON, ENGLAND

Chandos

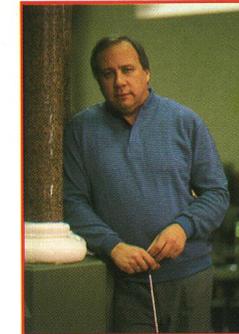
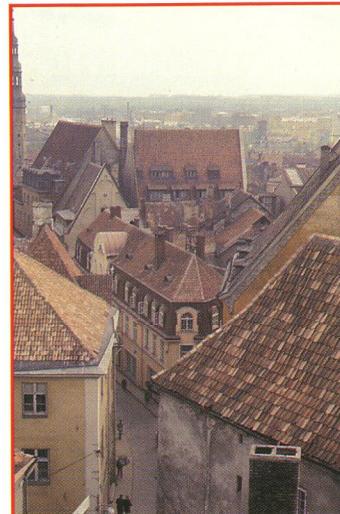
DIGITAL

MUSIC FROM
ESTONIA
Volume I

*HEINO ELLER: Elegia for Harp and Strings
Five Pieces for String Orchestra
Tone Poem "Dawn"*

KALJO RAID: Symphony No. 1 in C minor

NEEME JÄRVI conducting **The Scottish National Orchestra**



Heino Eller (1887–1970)

1 **Elegia for Harp and Strings** (1931) 12:59
Eluned Pierce solo harp

Five Pieces for String Orchestra (1953) 15:21

2	I	Andante con moto	5:34
3	II	Allegretto moderato	1:21
4	III	Vivo	1:40
5	IV	Lento assai poco rubato	2:13
6	V	Cantando espressivo	4:20

7 **Tone Poem “Dawn”** (1918) 8:10
John Digney solo oboe

Kaljo Raid (b.1922)

Symphony No. 1 in C minor (1944) 37:31

8	I	Funebre, energico	15:38
9	II	Vivace, meno allegretto	8:31
10	III	Andante, poco maestoso	13:16

TT 74:20

Scottish National Orchestra
Edwin Paling leader
Neeme Järvi

Music from Estonia

Estonia was even slower to emerge on to the musical scene than Finland. In the nineteenth century Finland was a provincial backwater, an autonomous Grand Duchy under Tsarist hegemony, and culturally still indebted to Sweden. Indeed it was not until 1882 that the Helsinki Orchestra was put on a permanent footing; but in the 1890s Finland had at least the advantage of a major figure on which attention focused.

Estonia was less fortunate: it did not enjoy even the limited autonomy the Finns had, and although there was a strong choral tradition, the musical heritage was more dependent on St Petersburg. The first symphonic work by an Estonian composer, the Overture *Julius Caesar* by Rudolf Tobias (1873–1918), did not appear until 1896, and orchestral concerts of any regularity did not really get under way in Tartu and Tallinn much before the turn of the century.

Heino Eller has been called ‘the Father of Modern Estonian Music’, and though he is hardly known outside his native country, he certainly played a vital role in its

development. He belongs to the same generation as Martinů and Prokofiev.

He was born in Tartu in the south east of the country, nearer to Pskov than the capital, Tallinn. Tartu was a small university town whose population numbered some 21,000 souls in the late 1860s, when it was host to the first choral festival in the Baltic countries.

Eller pursued his studies in St Petersburg, enrolling in the Faculty of Law from 1908 to 1912, and at the same time took violin and composition lessons with Vassily Kalafati, whose pupils had also included Stravinsky and Prokofiev.

After the disruption of the First World War, in which he served, Eller returned to Petrograd, as St Petersburg was briefly called after the Russian Revolution, becoming a composition pupil of Maximilian Steinberg. (It was under Steinberg’s tutelage that Shostakovich later composed his First Symphony.) He graduated in 1920 and spent the next two decades in Tartu, where he taught at the Higher School of Music until 1940. He then became professor of composition at the Tallinn Conservatory.

Here his pupils included Eduard Tubin, the best-known Estonian composer in the west, Kaljo Raid and Arvo Pärt.

He was quite prolific, and his output encompasses three symphonies (written in 1936, 1947 and 1961 respectively). The last gained him a State Prize, as did his Violin Concerto in 1965. There are five string quartets, too, written between 1925 and 1959, and a large number of other orchestral and instrumental pieces including four piano sonatas, two violin sonatas and about 180 smaller pieces for piano.

Marina Nestyeva writes in the New Grove, that 'the northern colouring of Eller's music places it close to Grieg while his refined nervous tension and impetuousness align him with Skryabin'. There are strong Scandinavian shadows, but his use of Estonian folk music lends his language a rather distinctive feel when one comes closer to it.

His *Elegia* for strings and harp comes from 1931, the year after his Second Quartet. There is an impassioned threnody on the strings before a dialogue involving solo viola and harp emerges that almost suggests Eller had some Gallic sympathies. However, he never allows feeling to run riot, and there is a quiet restraint that is affecting. Its nobility and finely sustained eloquence comes closer to

Elgar or Stenhammar than Grieg, and must spring, one feels, from a keenly-felt grief.

The *Five Pieces* for string orchestra appeared two decades later in 1953, but are in fact transcriptions of much earlier piano pieces, some of them with a Grieg-like lyrical appeal.

While he was studying with Steinberg, Eller wrote a number of tone poems including *Episood revolutsioonijast* (Episode from the Time of Revolution), *Videvik* (Twilight) and *Koit* (Dawn)¹, which is recorded here. It is as much, if not more, indebted to Scandinavian models than to the Russian post-nationalists.

¹Grove calls this 'Zarya', but I suspect that this is the transliteration of the Russian for this title.

The release of this recording coincides with the hundredth anniversary of Heino Eller's birth.

Kaljo Raid comes from Tallinn itself and was barely seventeen when Stalin incorporated Estonia and the other Baltic States into the Soviet Union. Like Eduard Tubin, he fled to Sweden in 1944, when the Russians returned, and continued his studies in philosophy and theology at Stockholm University.

After the war he emigrated to the United States and took a degree in Divinity in 1951, pursuing his musical studies in the early 1950s with Ibert and Milhaud before settling in Canada, where since 1954 he has been active as a Baptist priest.

For a time he occupied himself with the study of medieval music. He has written in most forms and is highly prolific; his style has embraced dodecaphony, polyrhythms and also what one might call poly-spacial effects. (In his Second Symphony, for example, the wind section plays in an adjoining room.)

His work includes a *Lacrimosa* (1970) for violin and cello in memory of Heino Eller, with whom he was still studying at the time of his First Symphony of 1944. It was with this symphony that he first attracted attention, and its confident stride and fine craftsmanship are a tribute both to his teacher and the young composer's emerging talent.

© Robert Layton

Neeme Järvi took up his appointment as Musical Director and Principal Conductor of the Scottish National Orchestra in August 1984, since when both he and the Orchestra have received great critical acclaim. Born in

Tallinn, Estonia, in 1937, he graduated from Tallinn Music School with degrees in percussion and choral conducting before continuing his studies at the Leningrad State Conservatory. In 1963 he became Director of the Estonian Radio and Television Orchestra and began his thirteen-year tenure as Chief Conductor of the Opera Theatre Estonia.

He took up residence in North America in 1980 and almost immediately made his debut with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. He now makes frequent appearances with the San Francisco, Toronto, Montreal and Chicago Symphony Orchestras and has also appeared with the Philadelphia, Boston and Los Angeles Symphony Orchestras. His engagements at the Metropolitan Opera have included *Eugene Onegin* and a new production of Mussorgsky's *Khovantschina*. He works frequently in Europe – at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and with German and Scandinavian Orchestras – and is Chief Conductor of the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra in Sweden.

His extensive recordings with the SNO on Chandos include the complete Prokofiev Symphonies, a set of Six Opera Suites by Rimsky-Korsakov, Scriabin's Symphony No. 2, Shostakovich's Symphonies 1 & 6,

Rachmaninov's Choral Symphony *The Bells*, and a coupling of *Scheherazade* and *Sienka Razin*. Recently two major cycles have been launched: Dvořák's Symphonies with Symphonic Poems, and Richard Strauss's Tone Poems coupled with groups of his orchestrated songs, including Four Last Songs with Felicity Lott.

The **Scottish National Orchestra** became a full-time body serving the whole of Scotland in 1950, although its history (as the Scottish Orchestra) dates back to 1891. Under Karl Rankl, Hans Swarowsky and, more recently, Sir Alexander Gibson, the SNO has achieved remarkable international prestige, acknowledged in 1978 with a grant of patronage by Her Majesty the Queen.

In addition to making around one hundred-and-fifty appearances each year in Scotland, the SNO appears regularly at many of the British festivals, including the London Proms and the Edinburgh Festival. Touring commitments have included many cities in the UK, several European trips and two visits to North America.

The SNO has built up a considerable reputation as a recording orchestra and recently won the Gramophone Award for the best orchestral recording of 1985 for its recording of Prokofiev's Symphony No. 6 with Neeme Järvi. The SNO played a major role in the first years of Scottish Opera and its involvement with contemporary music includes the triennial festival Musica Nova.

Producer Brian Couzens

Sound engineer Ralph Couzens

Assistant engineer Philip Couzens

Recording venue SNO Centre, Glasgow; August 1986

Front cover Neeme Järvi by Eric Thorburn; view of Tallinn, Estonia by John Massey Stewart

Cover design Christopher Sims

Art direction Janet Osborn

© 1986 Chandos Records Ltd

© 1986 Chandos Records Ltd

Chandos Records Ltd, Colchester, Essex, England

Printed in the EU

MUSIC FROM ESTONIA Vol. 1 - Scottish National Orchestra/Järvi

CHANDOS
CHAN 8525

CHANDOS DIGITAL

CHAN 8525

- | | | |
|----|--|-------|
| 1 | Heino Eller (1887–1970) | |
| | Elegia for Harp and Strings (1931) | 12:59 |
| | Eluned Pierce solo harp | |
| | Five Pieces for String Orchestra (1953) | 15:21 |
| 2 | I Andante con moto | 5:34 |
| 3 | II Allegretto moderato | 1:21 |
| 4 | III Vivo | 1:40 |
| 5 | IV Lento assai poco rubato | 2:13 |
| 6 | V Cantando espressivo | 4:20 |
| 7 | Tone Poem “Dawn” (1918) | 8:10 |
| | John Digney solo oboe | |
| | Kaljo Raid (b.1922) | |
| | Symphony No. 1 in C minor (1944) | 37:31 |
| 8 | I Funebre, energico | 15:38 |
| 9 | II Vivace, meno allegretto | 8:31 |
| 10 | III Andante, poco maestoso | 13:16 |
| | TT | 74:20 |



DDD

Scottish National Orchestra
Edwin Paling leader
Neeme Järvi

CHANDOS RECORDS LTD.
Colchester · Essex · England

LC 7038

© 1987 Chandos Records Ltd. © 1987 Chandos Records Ltd.
Printed in the EU

MUSIC FROM ESTONIA Vol. 1 - Scottish National Orchestra/Järvi

CHANDOS
CHAN 8525