

Särmä

Särmä, for accordion and piano.

Duration: 13 minutes.

The accordion and the piano complement each other in wonderful ways. This most unusual duo, which can present itself as two separate units, is also capable of behaving as a single organism. The accordion completely obliterates the piano in the arena of sustained notes and breath, but it cannot match the piano's percussive attack and evenness of volume throughout the whole register. Although they may chose to behave as opponents, they can also disappear into one another.

'Särmä' is divided into four movements, each of them exploiting a different mode of interaction between these instruments. In the first movement they work as a single unit, as a hyper instrument capable of dense textures and relentless rhythms. The second movement underlines the accordion's ability to sustain notes in contrast to a minimalist-like texture in the piano. Later on, they complement each other by creating rhythmic patterns that would be impossible to produce by a single player.

The third movement is full of virtuosic figurations and super fast scales. Here, both instruments are in constant dialogue, adding color and dynamism to this constantly flowing, scherzo-like movement.

In addition to compiling the material shown before, the final movement allows us to appreciate both instruments at their full potential. Toward the end of the piece, a chorale-like texture appears in the accordion accompanied by fast traveling chords that move throughout the whole keyboard at mind-boggling speeds.

This piece was commissioned by Oulun Musiikkijuhlat (Oulu Music Festival, Finland) and is dedicated to Niko Kumpuvaara and Kiril Kozlovsky.

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