



New Helsinki Quartet

Petri Aarnio, Violin

Taija Kilpiö, Violin

Ilari Angervo, Viola

Joel Laakso, Cello

„compelling through and through“ Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 21 March 2001

The New Helsinki Quartet (NHQ) is the composition of the most talented Finnish musicians, mainly from the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra. The repertoire of this versatile ensemble ranges from the classical to the avant-garde, and its special affinity for contemporary music has led NHQ to the premieres and performances of works by the contemporary composers, such as Jouni Kaipainen, Pehr Erik Nordgren, Einojuhani Rautavaara, Aulis Sallinen and Joonas Kokkonen. In November 2004, NHQ founded its own string quartet series in Helsinki, to where the renowned guest quartets, such as the Juilliard and Hagen Quartets, have been frequently invited.

Formed in 1982, NHQ won the first prizes at the competitions of Viitasaari and Concertina Prague already in 1984. It captured the international attention in 1994, when it was prize winner at the International String Quartet Competition in London. It received no less than three awards including the Audience Prize and the Sydney-Griller-Award for the best performance of the contemporary work. NHQ was subsequently invited by Wigmore Hall to give its debut as a part of the "Young Masters" series, which was so successful that it was immediately re-invited to play the final concert of the 1995/1996 season. In 1997, NHQ was awarded with one of the most important Finnish awards, the Nuori Suomi, which is granted once a year to the single artists or ensembles for outstanding achievements within the performing arts.

NHQ has made concert-tours around Europe, in Australia, Japan and Israel. It has performed in the most prestigious concert halls, such as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Konzerthaus in Berlin, Herkulessaal in München, Museumsgesellschaft in Frankfurt, Konserthus in Stockholm, Tonhalle in Zürich, Auditoria Nacional de Espana in Madrid, Wigmore Hall and Barbican in London, as well as in Barcelona and Valencia. NHQ has been invited to the major music festivals both in Scandinavia and around Europe, such as Helsinki, Copenhagen, Bergen, Kuhmo, and the City of London Festival. In 1998, for example, it played Bartok's six string quartets on two subsequent days at the Helsinki Festival. In the season 2004/2005, it debuted at the Athens Chamber Music Festival and performed also in Germany and the Netherlands. In this season 2005/2006, NHQ Quartet will perform in Germany, Belgium and Switzerland.

NHQ's discography includes among others Janacek's String Quartets No. 1 and 2, Sibelius's op. 56 "Voces Intimae," and Grieg's String Quartet No. 1 (Warner Finlandia), as well as Weber's Clarinet Quintet with Kari Kriikku (Ondine).



Petri Aarnio studied at the Sibelius Academy with Lajos Garam and at the East Helsinki Music Institute with Geza Szilvay. He continued his studies in New York with Dorothy DeLay und Joel Smirnoff from 1984 to 1990. Petri Aarnio is the concert-master of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and plays a Vincenzo Ruggeri violin from 1696.

Taija Kilpiö started playing the violin in 1979 at the Lahti Conservatory and continued her studies with Seppo Tukiainen and Mi-Kyung Lee at the Sibelius Academy, graduating in 2000. She has also studied with Zinaida Gilels, Ilja Grubert, and Pavel Vernikov at the Kuhmo Violin School, and from 1998 to 1999 with Mihaela Martin at the Hochschule der Künste Cologne. Today, Taija Kilpiö is a concert-master of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and a member of the Virtuosi di Kuhmo Chamber Orchestra. She plays a Goffredo Cappa violin.

Ilari Angervo studied at the Sibelius Academy with Helge Valtonen and Jouko Mansnerus. From 1988 to 1990, he continued his studies with Wolfram Christ at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin. Since 1990, Ilari Angervo has been the Principal Violist of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra. As soloist, he has appeared with the major orchestras in Finland as well as in Germany, Russia and Japan. He plays a J.B. Guadagnini viola made in 1762.

Joel Laakso started playing the cello at the Music Institute of Riihimäki and continued his studies at the Sibelius Academy from 1991, where he has studied with Martti Rousi from 1997. Joel Laakso also studied with Torleif Thedéen at the Edsberg Chamber Music Institut in Sweden. He is a member of the Virtuosi di Kuhmo Chamber Orchestra and plays a cello made by Eero Haahti in 2003.

Season 2005/2006