

September 2022

The Orchestral Triptych

I am writing three orchestral pieces, a triptych of poetic-politically themed orchestral works.

1. The first part of the triptych is the "Symphony for the Waters". It's some 50 minutes of Oceans Life Music. Planned to be ready in the winter 2022-'23, but already there are a few sneak previews available for listening...
<https://symphonyforthewaters.com/>
2. Next, the second part is the "Human Rights' Oratorio". This is the longest of the three pieces, about 1 hour & 15 minutes. It is almost completed and here are some early demo recordings...
<https://humanrightsoratorio.com/>
3. The third and concluding part of the triptych is "The Ballet of Democracy". It only exists in my head as yet and will be scored for symphony orchestra (in this case with an extended percussion section) and ballet / choreography / dancers. Similarly to the first part of the triptych it's approximately 50 minutes.

In each of these three pieces the symphony orchestra is one of the two actors. The other actor, the counterpart, is in each piece a different contributor. I think of it as the dancing- or the discussion-partner, the good friend, the love-partner or the challenger. The one you want to, and must, dialogue with.

1. In the first instalment, the Symphony, aquatic sounds form that counterpart. A soundscape, or musique concrète, literally made up of marine sounds. The sounds of the oceans and the rivers, and their inhabitants – the mammals and birds and all the other noise-makers. All of them and all of that making up this soundscape and picking up the dialogue with the symphony orchestra.
2. Words fill that role in the Oratorio. The text, sung and narrated, is the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, Eleanor Roosevelt et al, December 10th 1948). Arguably the most important text of our time, perhaps surprisingly it is the first time it has been set to music. This text celebrates its 75th anniversary in December 2023.
3. In the third instalment it's the dancers / the choreography. The music, and also the interaction between music and dance, will be reflective of mankind's continuous wrangling between democracy and autocracy. Freedom and tyranny. Emancipation and subordination. Reflecting, like light rays into a diamond, into "the Ballet of Democracy".

Of course these themes are also three pillars upon which our lives and societies are built.

1. The biological fundament of all of our lives – the waters of our earth.
2. The contract we have with each other, the fundament of which is the Human Rights.
3. The society we build in, and between, our different countries. Aiming for democracy.

So I put the symphony orchestra smack-dab in the middle of society, into those discussions, writing music about that. Art as, simultaneously, an expression of everyday life and our most strenuous endeavours. Perhaps only music can express all that at once? In any case it is what I aim for in creating this poetic-politically themed triptych. I have written bits and pieces of the music throughout my life, and now – with newly written additions – the music is fully coming into its own.

Those themes – nature and ecology, human rights and democracy – being a lifelong locus and a poetical-political devotion of mine. Just like music itself. Take a listen and get in contact if you want!

Anders Jallén

