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FESTIVALS

Oulu October of New Music

Joensuu Winter of Music

Klang concert series Helsinki

Night of Faith Tohmajärvi

ORCHESTRAS

Helsinki Police Symphonic Band

Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra (KPKO)

Joensuu Conservatoire Symphony Orchestra

ENSEMBLES

Zagros Ensemble

Arctos Ensemble

PERFORMERS

soprano Helena Juntunen

pianist Jukka Nykänen

clarinetist Mikko Raasakka

pianist Ilmo Ranta

Auri-Helena Nikkinen

COMPOSER

PROFILE

Auri-Helena Nikkinen (BMus) is a Finnish composer and professional musician, currently based in Helsinki, Finland. Nikkinen has worked as a composer since 2015, and written music for a variety of orchestras and ensembles, including Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra, Helsinki Police Symphonic Band, Joensuu Conservatoire Symphony Orchestra, Zagros Ensemble and Arctos Ensemble. Nikkinen's music has been performed at Oulu October of New Music Festival, Joensuu Winter of Music Festival, Klang Concert Series in Helsinki, and Night of Faith Festival in Tohmajärvi. Currently Nikkinen is pursuing a master's degree in the composition department of Sibelius Academy, Helsinki, under the tutorage of DMus Matthew Whittall. Some of Nikkinen's previous teachers have included Lauri Kilpiö, Ville Raasakka and Inga Grigorieva. Nikkinen is a graduate of Joensuu Conservatoire, where she studied violin with DMus Tapani Yrjölä.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Music, Composition

Sibelius-Academy, Helsinki 2019 – 2024

Bachelor studies in the Sibelius-Academy included studies in both the Department of Composition (3,5 years) and the Department of Music pedagogy (2 years), allowing Nikkinen to acquire a deep understanding of both music composition and music pedagogy.

Musician

Joensuu Conservatoire, Joensuu 2017 – 2019

Studies in Joensuu Conservatoire focused on violin playing (with Dr of music Tapani Yrjölä) and composition (with Inga Grigorieva and Jukka Koistinen). Playing in multiple Conservatoire orchestras and ensembles was also an essential part of the curriculum.

Matriculation Examination

Tohmajärvi high school, Tohmajärvi 2013 – 2017

Grades: Finnish and Swedish: Laudatur

History and Philosophy: Eximia cum laude approbatur

English and Religion studies: Magna cum laude approbatur

PREMIERS (selected)

Sumun syvimmästä sopukasta

Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra. March 2025
Piece for **string orchestra**. Premiered in the *Uuden uutukaista* ("Brand New") concert in the Fordell Hall of Snellmann Music Center, Kokkola. Premiere was conducted by Mikael Lopenen. *Sumun syvimmästä sopukasta* tells a story about a creature that is born from the mist of a swamp and ventures into the surrounding world. The creature experiences many things, but in the end never quite finds what it's looking for, and in its disappointment towards the world finally returns to the swamp and vanishes into the fog.
14'

Globi et lineae

Marja Kari, Ilmo Ranta February 2025
Piece for **mezzo-soprano and piano**. Premiered in the "Valokeilassa Auri-Helena Nikkinen" profile concert organized by *Laulumusiikin ystävät* society, in the main hall of Kamppi service centre. The Latin text of *Globi et lineae* describes how important musicians are to composers, and to the very essence of music itself.
7'

Sadepisaroiita (Droplets of rain)

Assi Penttilä, Jonna Hänninen November 2024
Piece for **young voice and piano**. Premiered in the final concert of L.I.E.D composition competition in the Helsinki Conservatoire main hall. Sadepisaroiita was awarded *Laulumusiikin ystävät* society's special prize in the competition.
2'

Muistoja kesästä (Memories of Summer)

Kamun nuorisodiskanttikuoro November 2024
An a cappella choral work for **descant choir (SSA)** consisting of three movements: Pilvet (Clouds), Sumussa (In the mist) and Tuuli (Wind). Premiered in Kaarina-talo (Kaarina house) in Kaarina, Turku. Concert was conducted by Iida Aarnio.
8'

Regards from Montes de Toledo

Tuule-Helin Krigul, Teuvo Taimioja, Otto Nuoranne June 2024
A trio for **flute, guitar and cello**. Premiered in the main hall of Sibelius Academy R building, Helsinki.
6'

Your Music

Matilda Nikkinen, Olli Mikkonen June 2024
Short song for **soprano and piano**, praising the healing kindness experienced when listening to music that manages to touch the listener's soul. Dedicated to guitarist and composer Jouko Nikkinen. Premiered in the main hall of Sibelius-Academy R building, Helsinki.
2'

Tyhjiä hönkäyksiä (Empty Breaths) – Hohe

Heidi Hämäläinen June 2024
For **soprano and a paper accordion**. A powerful piece growing out of frustration, with slight undertones of criticism for the current state of contemporary art. Premiered in the main hall of Sibelius-Academy R building, Helsinki.
5'

An Urban Tiger

Elina Rautiainen June 2024
A **solo piano** piece contemplating the not-always-so-harmonious relationship between man and nature. Premiered in the main hall of Sibelius-Academy R building, Helsinki.
5'

Humoresque pour Maxim – Memoir of a Drunken Toucan

Aaro Lehtovaara, Tanja Niiranen June 2024
A humorous piece for **bassoon and piano**, with some tragicomic remarks on alcohol consumption. Premiered in the main hall of Sibelius-Academy R-Building.
5'

The Forest Within Me

Helsinki Police Symphonic Band May 2024
Piece for **wind orchestra**, premiere conducted by Kyösti Vesterinen in Tempeliaukio church, Helsinki.
10'

From Cluelessness to Clarity

Zagros ensemble May 2024
Composed for a chamber ensemble consisting of **string quintet, flute, oboe, clarinet, piano and percussions**. Premiere conducted by Petri Komulainen in the Camerata hall of Helsinki Music Centre.
8'

Hunnuton (Unveiled)

Helena Juntunen, Jukka Nykänen May 2023
For **soprano and piano**, set to Aila Meriluoto's poem *Hunnuton*. Commissioned by Hämeenlinna Sibelius Society. Premiered in Kutomo's concert hall, Hämeenlinna.
5'

Lagoon

Matilda Nikkinen, Kemal Achourbekov May 2023
Piece for **soprano and piano**, describing the peaceful but mysteriously enchanting atmosphere of a warm, magical lagoon, with possible mermaids or sirens present. Premiered in the main hall of Joensuu Conservatoire.
4'

Medieval Adventure

Joensuu Conservatoire Symphony Orchestra Dec. 2022
Piece for **symphony orchestra**, describing the journey of a young adventurer in a fictional medieval kingdom. The piece conveys a message of courage and *sisu* being the best tools for combating challenges and hardships in life. Premiered in the main hall of Joensuu Conservatoire, conducted by Sakari Tervo.
9'

Trio for Flute, Guitar and Violoncello

Arctos Ensemble Oct. 2020
A trio for **flute, guitar and cello**, featuring several landscapes and atmospheres in a short time. Premiered in Utra church, Oulu, as a part of Oulu October of New Music Festival.
6'

Maisemat (Scenery)

Piritta Gröhn, Helena Nikkinen Feb. 2017
A piece for **viola and piano**, describing the magical scenery of Finnish summer night. Premiered in Carelicum center, as a part of Joensuu Winter of Music Festival (Joensuun musiikkitalvi).
4'

Lempeys tuo valon (Gentleness Brings the Light)

Eini Perälä, Helena Nikkinen Sep. 2015
Song for **soprano and piano**, inspired by themes of gentleness, self-acceptance, faith and love. Commissioned by Tohmajärvi congregation for the Night of Faith Festival. Premiered in the Tohmajärvi church.
4'

Aamu Joella (Morning by the river)

Helena Nikkinen May. 2014
Solo work for **piano**, depicting a lovely morning by a river flowing through a traditional Finnish coniferous forest. Premiered in the congregation hall of Tohmajärvi.
5'

Andalusialaisessa majatalossa (Andalusian Inn)

Helena Nikkinen, Henna Hirvikangas Oct. 2013
Piece for **violin and piano**, recalling the joyfully lively atmosphere of a Spanish inn. Premiered in the congregation hall of Tohmajärvi.
5'

Lähde (Fountain)

Helena Nikkinen 2013
Piano etude inspired by gushing water of a fountain. Premiered in the congregation hall of Tohmajärvi.
2'

Suivalssi (Summer Waltz)

Helena Nikkinen 2010
Solo work for **piano**, inspired by Finnish summer nights. Premiered in the congregation hall of Elimäki.
3'

Lohikäärmetaistelu (Fighting the Dragon)

Helena Nikkinen 2005
Music for a play, accompanying a scene of two knights fighting a dragon. Solo work for **piano**. Premiered in Peippola School, Elimäki.
1'

STIPENDS AND GRANTS (selected)

Martin Wegelius Foundation grant, Helsinki

Joensuu Conservatoire, Joensuu

Crumbs of Joy society, Middle Carelia

Kouvola music school *Kouvolan musiikkikoulu –
Satukielen iloiset sävelet*, Kouvola

North Kymi Music Institute, Kouvola

US Embassy, CIMO and VAISALA: Young
Ambassadors Program 2014 grant, Helsinki