

The varied concert offered two big surprises: that someone dares to write so unashamedly enjoyable, sinfully sexy music as the Swedish composer Rolf Martinsson (b. 1956)! And luckily he does not only dare to but he also can do it. Martinsson has studied the secrets of orchestral writing of the turn of the 19th and 20th century, added a little Gershwin, Broadway musical, entertaining sounds and a pinch of "modernism" to the brew.

As a Postmodernist Martinsson is not the only one of his kind; we also have our own hedonists and *stylistic borrowers* from Ilkka Kuusisto to Kimmo Hakola. But Martinsson is so skilful in his orchestration, *neo-cute* melodicism and silken harmonies, that you need to prick your ears for the second time: can this even be true?

When the shockingly good soprano Lisa Larsson performed Martinsson's brand new song cycle "Ich denke Dein..." and John Storgårds created an "überschön" orchestral background, the listener felt as if he was being led into an enchanted garden, where an angel had fallen from heaven. Larsson's soprano radiated and floated, and was sublime in the pianissimos. It soared effortlessly and entwined playfully with Pekka Kauppinen's intoxicating violin and Tomas Nuñez-Garcés's alert cello in the highest spheres/registers. Goethe's, Eichendorff's and Rilke's poems received a glittering blanket which made you blush a little on behalf of the classicists.

*Veijo Murtomäki, Helsingin Sanomat, 30 January 2015*