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# MISSA SOLEMNIS

FOR CHOIR, ORGAN, SOLI, PIANO AND CELESTA

## ANDREAS HALLÉN

I. KYRIE 9:23  
choir

II. GLORIA 15:46  
choir, soli SATB

III. CREDO 14:07  
choir, tenor solo

IV. SANCTUS 13:16  
choir

V. AGNUS DEI 10:06  
choir, soli SATB

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Total playing time: 62:39

Soloists  
Pia-Karin Helsing, soprano  
Maria Forsström, alto  
Conny Thimander, tenor  
Andreas E. Olsson, bass

Lars Nilsson, organ  
James Jenkins, piano  
Lars Sjöstedt, celesta

*Et in Spíritum Sanctum, Dóminum et  
vivificántem:  
qui ex Patre Filióque procedít.  
Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adorátur et  
conglorificátur:  
qui locútus est per prophétas.*

*Et unam, sanctam, cathólicam et  
apostólicam Ecclésiám.  
Confíteor unum baptísma in remissionem  
peccatórum.  
Et expécto resurrectionem mortuórum,  
et vitam ventúri sæculi. Amen.*

### Sanctus

*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Pleni sunt cæli et terra gloria tua.  
Hosanna in excelsis.  
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.  
Hosanna in excelsis.*

### Agnus Dei

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
dona nobis pacem.*

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored  
and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and  
apostolic Church.  
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness  
of sins  
and I look forward to the resurrection  
of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name  
of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the  
world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the  
world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the  
world, grant us peace.

## Credo

*Credo in unum Deum,  
Patrem omnipotentem,  
factorem cæli et terræ,  
visibilem omnium et invisibilem.*

*Et in unum Dóminum, Iesum Christum,  
Fílium Dei unigénitum,  
et ex Patre natum ante ómnia sæcula.  
Deum de Deo, lumen de lúmine,  
Deum verum de Deo vero,  
génitum, non factum,  
consubstantialém Patri:*

*per quem ómnia facta sunt.  
Qui propter nos hómines et propter nostram  
salútem descendit de cælis.*

*Et incarnátus est de Spíritu Sancto  
ex María Virgine,  
et homo factus est.*

*Crucifíxus étiam pro nobis sub Póntio Piláto;  
passus et sepúltus est,  
et resurréxit tértia die, secúndum Scriptúras,  
et ascéndit in cælum, sedet ad  
dexteram Patris.  
Et iterum ventúrus est cum glória,  
iudicáre vivos et mórtuos,  
cuius regni non erit finis.*

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
consubstantial with the Father;

through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,

and by the Holy Spirit was  
incarnate of the Virgin Mary,  
At the words that follow up to  
and including and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under  
Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

## The Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble

### Soprano

Virve Karén (2)  
Linnea Pettersson (1)  
Christina Fridolfsson (1,2)  
Lotta Kuisma (1,2)  
Alva Stern (1,2)  
Victoria Stanmore (2)

### Alto

Kerstin Eriksson (2)  
Anu Arvola (2)  
Cecilia Grönfelt (1,2)  
Katarina Karlsson (1,2)  
Anna Risberg (1,2)  
Anna-Karin Lindström (1,2)

### Tenor

Anders Lundström (1)  
Anders Eriksson (2)  
Stefan Millgård (1,2)  
Adrian Rubin (2)  
Mattias Lundström (1,2)  
Örjan Larsson (1,2)  
Mischa Carlberg (1)

### Bass

Martin Eriksson (1,2)  
Anders Sturk Steinwall (1)  
Andreas E. Olsson (1,2)  
Mikael Sandlund (2)

Jonatan Brundin (1,2)  
Olle Sköld (2)  
Rickard Collin (1)  
Anders Bek (1,2)

Lars Nilsson, organ  
James Jenkins, piano  
Lars Sjöstedt, celesta

**(1) 11–12 October 2019**  
Kyrie, Sanctus

**(2) 28 February–1 March 2020**  
Gloria, Credo, Agnus Dei





Andreas Hallén

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### Kyrie

*Kyrie eléïson.  
Christe eléïson.  
Kyrie eléïson.*

Lord have mercy.  
Christ have mercy.  
Lord have mercy.

### Gloria

*Gloria in excelsis Deo  
et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.*

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

*Laudamus te,  
benedicimus te,  
adoramus te,  
glorificamus te,  
gratias agimus tibi propter magnam  
gloriam tuam,  
Domine Deus, Rex caelestis,  
Deus Pater omnipotens.*

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your  
great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

*Domine Fili unigenite, Iesu Christe,  
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis;  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
suscipe deprecationem nostram.  
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,  
miserere nobis.*

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

*Quoniam tu solus Sanctus,  
tu solus Dominus,  
tu solus Altissimus,  
Iesu Christe,  
cum Sancto Spiritu:  
in gloria Dei Patris.  
Amen.*

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

## Lars Nilsson, organ

Lars Nilsson (b. 1966) started playing piano at the age of four. He studied at the School of Music at Luleå University of Technology with Hans-Ola Ericsson and later also with Gary Verkade for the organist diploma. Since 1996, Lars has been organist at Öjeby church, Piteå parish.

Often hired as an accompanist and soloist at concerts and recordings, Lars has given concerts on most of the major church organs in northern Sweden. Has also taught liturgical organ. Over the years, Lars has worked closely with the Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble.

## James Jenkins, piano

James Jenkins (b. 1974) is a versatile pianist who enjoys a wide range of artistic pursuits, including vocal and instrumental collaboration, choral accompaniment, vocal coaching, teaching and composing. American by birth, he is a former resident of the Washington, DC area where he performed in many prestigious venues, including the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, Arts Club of Washington, Smithsonian Institution, National Gallery of Art, and the Washington National Cathedral. Jenkins received his Master's degree in collaborative piano from the University of Maryland, College Park. Since 2019 James has been a collaborative pianist and piano teacher at Framnäs folk high school and lecturer at the School of Music at Luleå University of Technology since 2020.

## Lars Sjöstedt, celesta

Lars Sjöstedt (b. 1977) has been a student, accompanist and teacher at the School of Music at Luleå University of Technology. He further specialized in renaissance and baroque music in Bremen with prof. Harald Vogel. Currently he works as organist at Norrfjärden Church, close to Piteå.

## A significant musical pioneer

Johan [Johannes!] Andreas Hallén was born on 22 December 1846 in Göteborg (Gothenburg), Sweden. His musical talent was discovered at an early age and he took up playing the piano and later also the organ. As a teenager he set up a music society that gave a very successful concert, inspiring him to invest in becoming a professional musician.

Thanks to contributions from wealthy relatives, he was able to go to Germany as a 19-year-old to study music in Leipzig, Munich and Dresden. Initially he was strongly influenced by the music of the so-called Leipzig School, i.e. the rather conservative music of Mendelssohn and Schumann, but he later came in contact with the modernistic circles around Richard Wagner and Franz Liszt. Among his teachers during his first stay in Germany were Carl Reinecke (1824–1910) in Leipzig (composition), Joseph Rheinberger (1839–1901) in Munich (conducting), and Julius Rietz (1812–77) in Dresden (composition).<sup>2</sup>

After having studied in Germany, Andreas Hallén returned to Gothenburg in 1872. Impressed by the rich musical life in Germany, he had great ambitions to change the provincial musical state in Sweden. At that time, there was only one professional orchestra in the whole country, Kungliga Hovkapellet (the Royal Court Orchestra) in Stockholm. As a comparison, Germany still in 2021 has about 80 opera houses and 130 professional orchestras, despite that several institutions have been closed down the last 30 years.

In Gothenburg, the second city of Sweden, Nya Teatern (New Theatre) had been inaugurated in 1859 (in 1880 renamed Stora Teatern, Great Theatre). It was by then the country's second largest theatre, after Kungliga Teatern (Royal Theatre) in Stockholm (i.e. the Gustavian opera theatre at Gustav Adolf's square, which was demolished in 1891 to make way for the current opera house, which was inaugurated in 1898). However, the musical activities in Gothenburg, which mainly consisted of light entertainment and some guest performances from Stockholm, went so badly throughout the 19th century that by 1917, the theatre was close to being rebuilt into a cinema. Not until the 1920s was there a more organised opera scene in Gothenburg.

Admittedly, a rich amateur music life flourished in many places around the country, especially in chamber music, and there were also various music societies arranging orchestral concerts.

<sup>1</sup> Halén [sic!], Alfihild: "Andreas Hallén" (article in *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon*, vol. 18, p. 18, Stockholm, 1969–71). Here Johannes is mentioned as Hallén's second name, in other sources it says Johan.

<sup>2</sup> Carlsson, Anders: "Handel och Bacchus eller Händel och Bach?" — *Det borgerliga musiklivet och dess orkesterbildningar i köpmannastaden Göteborg under andra hälften av 1800-talet*, pp. 322–323, 327, 340–343 (Skrifter från Musikvetenskap, Göteborgs Universitet, No. 43, Tre Böcker förlag, 1996)

But none of this even came close to the rich, professional music life that Hallén got to know in Germany. For seven years (1872–78) Hallén devoted himself to being conductor of the Göteborgs Musikförening (Gothenburg Music Society), to leading Harmoniska Sällskapet (Harmonic Society), and to starting Nya Sängsällskapet (New Singing Society). This was a pioneering activity — it was not until 1905 that what later became the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra was founded.

Hallén eventually became discouraged by the many difficulties he faced while trying to improve the quality of music in Sweden, so he returned to Germany, where he worked as a singing teacher in Berlin for five years (1879–83). It was during this stay that he became seriously affected by the Wagnerian musical drama and focused his own style of composition in that direction. He also got to know the influential pianist, conductor, and composer Franz Liszt personally, and Hallén's first opera *Harald der Wiking* was premiered in Leipzig in 1881 on Liszt's recommendation.

Andreas Hallén was the first Swedish composer to adopt the modernist, Wagnerian, chromatic style of music. In his operas, he also used both the so-called 'infinity melodies' and 'leitmotifs'. The fact that his music in several respects has taken strong impressions of Wagner's musical dramas has sometimes been used as a derogatory argument against his work, but how could one have stayed in such a strong magnetic field as the Wagnerian without being influenced? Would we today criticise a composer who has been in the circles around Pierre Boulez and the IRCAM institute in Paris at the end of the 20th century for having traces of those ideals in his or her music? No, we would rather expect that. And probably a contemporary Swedish composer who returns from Paris to Sweden would eventually make his own synthesis of the stylistic impressions he or she has taken in different places. That is also the nature of Andreas Hallén's relationship to the Wagnerian style.

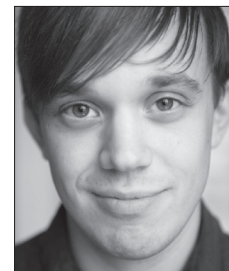
As early as 1881, in connection with the premiere of *Harald der Wiking*, a critic in the prestigious German magazine *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* had pointed out that Hallén's...

"motifs are not Wagnerian, but completely individual. They are short, concise, extremely illuminating but also more brittle, less warm-blooded, we would say more defiant and therefore less upsetting."<sup>3</sup>

3 Rundgren, Alfred: *Svensk Operakonst*, p. 244 (Kultur och Form, Stockholm, 1952)

## Conny Thimander, tenor

Conny Thimander is a Swedish tenor who received his Master of Arts degree from the Opera Academy in Stockholm. He made his debut as Tamino in *The Magic Flute* at the Royal Opera in Stockholm. Since then, he has sung in houses such as Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Gothenburg Opera, Theater Bonn, Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, Malmö Opera, Piccolo Regio at the Torino Opera, Jyske Opera, Piteå Chamber Opera and Drottningholm Palace Theatre. He is frequently engaged for concerts and has performed with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, Eric Ericson Chamber Choir, Helsinki Baroque Orchestra, Malmö Symphony Orchestra, Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra, Swedish Radio Choir, Copenhagen Phil, Aalborg Symphony Orchestra and Dalasinfoniettan.



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## Andreas E. Olsson, bass

Andreas E. Olsson is a baritone active both as ensemble singer as well as a soloist.. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm, Opera Studio 67 with Professor Solwig Grippe. Andreas has performed as a soloist in many of the great sacred oratorios and has also participated in opera and theater productions, including at Vadstena Academy and the Folk Theater in Gävle. He also sings Swedish folk music and has portrayed C. M. Bellman in the one-man show "Bellman's Order of Bacchus". Andreas also writes choral arrangements and is a regular member of the Eric Ericson Chamber Choir.



© Pär Fridberg

## Pia-Karin Helsing, soprano

Pia-Karin Helsing started her musical career as a cellist, but after studying at Opera Studio 67 in Stockholm with Ulla Blom, Ulrich Staerk, Helena Döse and others, she decided to continue as a singer. As a spinto-soprano, she has a particular affinity for Italian repertoire, but also for Scandinavian romances, especially Sibelius. In 2017 she released the album *Nordiska romanser* with the pianist Helge Kjekshus. She is a frequent soloist for performances of oratorios such as *St. Matthew Passion*, *Messiah* and Brahms' requiem.

Especially notable are her award-winning shows which combine personal topics with her vocal and cello performances. Pia-Karin has won several prizes such as the Rubus Arcticus and has performed in the USA, Canada, Norway, Finland and Sweden.

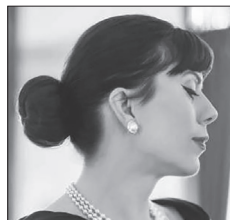


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## Maria Forsström, alto

Maria Forsström, mezzo-soprano, is equally comfortable in the song, symphonic and opera literature. A noted Mahler interpreter, her repertoire spans from early Baroque to 20th-century composers such as Luciano Berio and Benjamin Britten. Maria graduated from the Royal College of Music in Stockholm as an organist, choir conductor and pianist. She continued her studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, specializing in Baroque and Classical ornamentation and completed her studies in orchestra conducting at the Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory in St. Petersburg. Despite her thorough instrumental education, she was finally inspired to become a singer.

She is also in demand as a vocal coach for choirs such as the Gothenburg Symphony Chorus, the Swedish Chamber Choir and the French Radio Choir. Maria Forsström has performed with orchestras on stages throughout Europe as well as Russia and Japan. She has recorded for Musica Rediviva, Sony Classical and Chandos.



© Jenny Blad

However, it must be emphasized that Hallén himself was hesitant to imitate Wagner's music too much. Already in 1880, when he was composing his first opera, *Harald der Viking*, this was clear from letters to his librettist, Hans Herrig.<sup>4</sup> When it comes to music from the latter part of his life, such as *Missa Solemnis*, his style changed to a mixture of conservative and modernist romantic music with elements of romantic nationalism.

Hallén maintained good foreign contacts throughout his life, which meant that several of his works were printed by foreign publishers, especially German ones but at least one piece was published by the American publisher G. Schirmer in New York (*Die Büsserin/A Penitential Psalm*, in 1891), which shows how widely his music reached in his time.

After the years in Germany, he lived in Stockholm — with the exception of five years in Malmö — from 1884 until his death, 11 March 1925. In the capital he worked as a second conductor at the Royal Opera (1892–97), where he conducted the Swedish premiere of Wagner's opera *Die Walküre*. He was also professor of composition at Kungliga Musikaliska Akademiens Musikkonservatorium (the Conservatory of the Royal Academy of Music) 1909–19, and a music critic in *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*. In 1885, Hallén founded Filharmoniska Sällskapet (the Philharmonic Society) in Stockholm, with the purpose to perform works for chorus and orchestra (usually with musicians from the Royal Court Orchestra). He also made an unsuccessful attempt in 1890–91 to establish Filharmoniska Symfoniorkestern (Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra).<sup>5</sup> There was no permanent concert orchestra in Stockholm until 1914 when Konsertföreningen (Concert Society, now Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra) was established.

During the five years he spent in Malmö (1902–07), the country's third city, he founded Sydsvenska Filharmoniska Föreningen (South Swedish Philharmonic Association), with a similar purpose as the Philharmonic Society in Stockholm, consisting of about 120 singers and 40 musicians. Here, too, he was a pioneer — it was not until 1911 that the current Malmö Symphony Orchestra was founded.

Hallén was also a pioneer in performing older music. An active member of Ceciliaföreningen (Cecilia Society, 1887–89)<sup>6</sup>, he was the first ever to perform Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in Sweden in 1890, and Heinrich Schütz's *The Seven Words of Jesus Christ on the Cross* in 1891, as well as music of Palestrina and Orlando di Lasso. It is reasonable to claim that Hallén was

4 Tillman, Joakim: "Andreas Hallén" (biographical text, *Levande Musikarv*, Royal Swedish Academy of Music, [www.swedishmusicalheritage.com](http://www.swedishmusicalheritage.com), 2016).

5 Halén, Alfhild: "Andreas Hallén" (article in *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon*, vol. 18, p. 18, Stockholm, 1969–71)

6 Percy, Gösta: "Andreas Hallén" (article in *Sohlmans Musiklexikon*, vol. 3, p. 297, Stockholm, 1976). The Cecilia Society was part of the German *Cecilian Movement* ("Cäcilianismus") for church music reform in the second half of the 19th century. Among other things, they were interested in reviving the old a cappella music of Palestrina and other composers.

one of the most important people who with his efforts at the end of the 19th century laid the foundation for the rich musical life we have in Sweden today, and this in both old and new music, in choral music, opera and orchestral music. In this way, he eventually became successful with his youthful ambition from the 1870s to help raise the level of Swedish music life.

### Hallén's compositions

Andreas Hallén composed four operas. The first was, as mentioned, *Harald der Wiking* (1881). Then came *Hexfällan* (1896), *Waldemarsskatten* (1898), and *Valborgsmässa* (a reworking of *Hexfällan*, 1902). *Waldemarsskatten* in particular was a great success and it remained in the Royal Theatre's repertoire for a full 25 years, from April 1899 to May 1924 (65 performances), making it one of the most performed Swedish operas of all time, alongside *Den Bergtagna* av Ivar Hallström (1826–1901), which was performed 85 times in 36 years (between May 1874 and March 1910). Both of these operas were extremely well known to several generations of opera audiences in Stockholm.

The following quotation from Wilhelm Peterson-Berger's (1867–1942) review of the *Waldemarsskatten* (13 April 1899) may be an indication of how much that opera was already appreciated at its premiere. Part of the matter is that Peterson-Berger liked to see himself as the only true 'Wagnerian' in Sweden at this time, and according to him, no one else really understood the so-called 'future music'.

"Saturday's premiere had the character of a courtship. *Waldemarsskatten* is a stormy declaration of love to the audience — and the audience said yes, with cheers, with rapture. The evening was a colossal success for Mr. Hallén, and I do not know how many times he was called in between the acts and after the opera, sometimes with the performers, the librettist, the conductor, and the stage designer, sometimes alone."<sup>7</sup>

Hallén also wrote incidental music for several plays and a number of tone poems in the spirit of Franz Liszt, *Fridthiof och Ingeborg* (1872), *En Sommarsaga* (1889), *Om Hösten* and *I Skymningen* (1895), *Die Todteninsel* (1898), and *Spärenklänge* (1905). There are several choral

<sup>7</sup> Peterson-Berger, Wilhelm: *Glimtar och skuggor ur Stockholms musikvärld 1896–1923*, vol. 1, p. 122 (Åhlén and Åkerlunds förlag, Stockholm, 1923)

### Erik Westberg, conductor

(b. 1956) studied choral conducting with Eric Ericson at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm 1976–1987. He has been the leader of numerous choirs, including the YMCA Choir in Stockholm and the Oslo Philharmonic Choir, and he has also been guest conductor of the Swedish Radio Choir. Internationally, Erik Westberg has been engaged as guest conductor for Pro Coro Canada, Coro Nacional de España, Coro Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo, and Jauna Muzika, Lithuania. He has also been Artist-in-Residence at Wollongong University, Australia. Since 2018, he has been artistic director of the Swedish Youth Choir.

His audio catalogue includes more than twenty recordings on the record labels Studio Acusticum Records, Opus3, Naxos, and Caprice, several of which have received excellent reviews. Erik Westberg received the Johannes Norrby-Medallion in 1993 and the Culture Prize of the Year from the newspaper Norrländska Socialdemokraten in 1997. In 1999 he was elected Choral Conductor of the Year by KÖRSAM (The Federation of Swedish Choir Associations) and received the Culture Prize of the Year from the Municipality of Piteå in 2002.

In 2006 Erik Westberg was presented with His Majesty the King's Medal of the Eighth Size with the ribbon of the Order of the Seraphim "for significant achievements in Swedish Musical Life". In 2016 he was awarded the Grant of Honour and Merit of Norrbotten County.

He has been a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music since 2008 and Professor of Choral Conducting and Choral Singing at the School of Music at Luleå University of Technology since 2003.



© Pär Backström



## Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble

The Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble was formed in 1993 and consists of 16–20 singers. The members of the Ensemble work as soloists, church musicians and music teachers and come from northern Sweden and Finland. The Ensemble has commissioned and premiered about 60 works by composers such as Gunnar Eriksson, Paula af Malmberg Ward, Tebogo Monnakgotla, Jan Sandström, Sven-David Sandström, Carl Unander-Scharin and Arvo Pärt.

The Swedish Broadcasting Corporation has, in close collaboration with the Ensemble, aired several live performances, both in Sweden and throughout Europe.

In 1996, the Ensemble's first CD *Musica Sacra* was released on the Opus3 label. The Ensemble's first collaboration with Studio Acusticum Records in 2010 resulted in the triple album *Pater Caelestis – Terra Mater – Vox Humana*. Since then, the Ensemble has recorded around 15 CDs and phonograms issued by the record companies Opus3, Studio Acusticum Records and Naxos. *Vita Nuova*, featuring Swedish choral music, was rated "world class" by the music magazine OPUS. In 2018, the double album *Amor Vita Mors* was released on streaming services, accompanied by a massive 60-page liner note. In 2020, the Ensemble premiered on the LP medium with a live recording of Bach's monumental B-minor Mass.

The Ensemble has undertaken more than 30 international tours to Europe, North and South America, Asia and Oceania. A particularly notable engagement was the project *Choral Singing for Peace and Justice* with a tour to Tonga and Samoa at the turn of the millennium, seen by more than 500 million viewers worldwide.



© Stefan Larsson

works with orchestral accompaniment, including *Vom Pagen und der Königstochter* (1871), *Traumkönig und sein Lieb* (1885), *Das Schloss im See* and *Styrbjörn Starke* (1889), *Botgörerskan* (A Penitential Psalm, 1890), *Julnatten* (The Christmas Night, 1895), *Dionysus* (1901), *Ett Julatorium* (A Christmas Oratorio, 1904), *Sverige* (Sweden, 1917) and *Missa Solemnis* (1920–22). He also wrote a number of other choral works, some for chorus a cappella, others for chorus and piano.

There are also several songs with orchestral accompaniment, a 'declamation' (*Den Unge Herr Sten Sture*, 1889) and some chamber music, including a piano trio (1868), a piano quartet (1896), and some piano pieces, as well as songs and vocal duets with piano accompaniment. Undoubtedly a considerable production.

The name Andreas Hallén also appears in connection with the orchestral versions of Johannes Brahms's *Hungarian Dances*, no. 2 in D minor, and no. 7 in A major, two of the *Hungarian Dances* that Brahms did not orchestrate himself. These orchestrations were printed by the German publisher Simrock in Berlin.

Throughout his oeuvre we find a great craftsmanship with a, for Swedish conditions at this time, unusually refined harmonic and colouristic imagination. He had a remarkable ability to write well for the human voice and it was not really until Hugo Alfvén (1872–1960) made his debut with his first symphony, in 1897, that we in Sweden came across an equal in terms of mastering the art of orchestration in the late romantic style.

## Missa Solemnis

Hallén was active as a choir conductor for a large part of his career and it is hardly surprising that choral works make up a large part of his production. He had a great knowledge of choral music from all times, from Palestrina to Brahms and Verdi, which becomes apparent in *Missa Solemnis*, where he uses stylistic elements from many different eras.

The hour-long composition based on the Latin mass text was to become his last great work. Information about when it was composed varies — some evidence points to 1920–21, but in an interview in *Svenska Dagbladet* 17 November 1923, Hallén says that "the work was created last year", which would be in 1922. Considering that he was a man in his mid-70s at the time, it is conceivable that the work had developed over a longer period of time.

The work is written for four solo voices, mixed choir, organ, piano (or harp), and celesta. In the interview mentioned above Hallén explains in his own words:

“That I have avoided the orchestra has its very special reasons. In my *Christmas Oratorio* — composed a number of years ago — I used an orchestra and the experiences I gained from it urged me to avoid the orchestra this time. The *Christmas Oratorio* has admittedly been performed in no less than twelve different cities, in some of them a couple of times. But every performance has been associated with so much effort and cost to get an orchestra together, that I decided to avoid this troublesome apparatus this time, for purely practical reasons.”

He also explains that the work is intended for a church room with its special acoustics and that he doesn't think it would do well in a concert hall. The first performance, conducted by David Åhlén, was on Tuesday 20 November 1923, at 8pm, in Engelbrektskyrkan (Engelbrekt Church) in Stockholm, a very large church with 1400 seats and extremely an high ceiling (32 meters), which certainly offered the acoustical properties Hallén desired.

The vocal soloists were Davida Hesse-Lilienberg (soprano), Davida Afzelius-Bohlin (alto), Einar Ralf (tenor), and John [Per Johan] Johansson (baritone). The concert was arranged by Musikaliska Sällskapet (The Musical Society), an independent chorus, founded in 1907 and dissolved towards the end of the 1990s. From 1927, one year after the inauguration of Stockholm Concert Hall, they served as the chorus of Stockholms Konsertförening (Stockholm Concert Society, currently Kungliga Filharmoniska Orkestern/Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra), later under the name Kungliga Filharmoniska Kören (Royal Philharmonic Chorus). The organist and composer Oskar Lindberg (1887–1955) — formerly one of Hallén's composition students, played the organ part, Albin Rude the piano part and Martin Andreasson the celesta part.<sup>8</sup>

At Hallén's funeral, which took place in Engelbrektskyrkan one and a half years later (in March, 1925), Musikaliska Sällskapet under the direction of David Åhlén performed the *Kyrie* and *Agnus Dei* from *Missa Solemnis*, according to Hallén's expressed wish. On this occasion, the male soloists were the same as at the first performance, but the soprano part was sung by Greta Söderman and the alto part by Göta Wendel.<sup>9</sup>

The organ part is clearly written for a symphonic organ, a logical choice considering the interview, where Hallén himself suggests that it should, so to speak, replace an orchestra. At this time, the church was still relatively new (inaugurated in 1914), and it had a rather undersized pipe organ built by E.A. Setterqvist (40 stops, 3 manuals and pedal). Not until 1929, when the

instrument was rebuilt by Åkerman & Lund, did the extremely spacious church get a sufficiently large organ (97 stops, 4 manuals and pedal).<sup>10</sup> The instrument in 1923 was, however, appropriate for blending with the piano and the celesta and certainly large enough for *Missa Solemnis*.

The combination of organ, piano, and voices is unusual, but not entirely without precursors. During the latter part of the 19th century, it became common to write music for piano in combination with harmonium, an instrument that we know in the form that was patented in 1840 by Alexandre Debain in Paris and which quickly became very popular throughout Europe. In many affluent musical bourgeois homes one could find both a piano (or even two) as well as a harmonium. A good example of this combination is Gioachino Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle* from 1863, which in its original version is written for two pianos and a harmonium. Rossini's piano parts carry all of the musical structure — melodically, harmonically, and rhythmically — while the harmonium adds what is usually referred to as 'harmony parts'. In the case of *Missa Solemnis*, since the organ is a much more powerful instrument than the harmonium it is given the instrumental lead role, while the piano and the celesta are used to create rhythmically driving textures, or to add a brilliant sparkle to the organ sound.

Hallén's great experience from both the choral world and the opera world is noticeable in the vocal writing. The choir is used in a varied way, both homophonically and contrapuntally, while the soloists sing ensembles as well as solos and duets. Sometimes the soloists are used as a concertino group against the full chorus. The character of the music alternates between humble religiosity and operatic power, which creates a magnificent sacred choral work that has the potential to touch and enthuse an audience even a hundred years after the work was created, something that would have delighted an old opera fox like Hallén.

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8 Åhlén, David: *En kyrkomusikers minnen* (memoirs), p. 72 (January 1969, unpublished)

9 *ibid.*