

Jean Sibelius (December 8, 1865 – September 20, 1957)

Jean Sibelius was a Finnish composer and violinist, renowned for his significant contributions to the symphonic repertoire and his role in defining Finnish national identity through music. Born in Hämeenlinna, Finland, Sibelius studied at the Helsinki Music Institute (now the Sibelius Academy) and later in Berlin and Vienna.

Sibelius is best known for his seven symphonies, which are celebrated for their originality, rich orchestration, and deep expressiveness. His *Symphony No. 2* (1902) and *Symphony No. 5* (1915) are particularly notable, with the latter featuring a famous and innovative finale. Sibelius also composed tone poems such as *Finlandia* (1899), which became a symbol of Finnish nationalism, and *The Swan of Tuonela* (1895), part of his *Lemminkäinen Suite*, which reflects his interest in Finnish mythology and folklore.

Throughout his career, Sibelius faced various challenges, including a battle with alcoholism and a decline in creative output later in life. Nonetheless, his influence on 20th-century music was profound, shaping the development of modern symphonic and orchestral music. His innovative use of form and orchestration has left a lasting legacy in classical music.

Sibelius's contributions to music were widely recognized, and his works continue to be performed and admired for their melodic and structural ingenuity.