



Fire & Fancy

Nominated for a **LATIN GRAMMY®**



As their Latin GRAMMY® and International Classical Music Award nominations for this album demonstrate, the gentlemen of Sibelius Piano Trio feel at home in any musical style. When they play *Nene*, written for them by Argentine composer Diego Schissi, you hear Latin musicians offering you South American sunlight and Argentine dance rhythms. *Nene* celebrates the daydreams and fantasy world of a young boy. When Sibelius Piano Trio performs *Ruminations* by David S. Lefkowitz, the Trio conjures the mystical fire of Persian poetry. One can hear musical instruments including the oud, nose flute and Eastern European Klezmer in David's rhapsodic work inspired by the great 13th Century Persian poet and Sufi mystic Jalāl ad-Dīn Mohammad Rūmī.

Petteri, Juho and Samuli perform these works from the other side of the world from where they were born as fluently as they play celebrated Sibelius trios or modern classics by Finnish composer virtuosi Lotta Wennäkoski and Kaija Saariaho.

J.P. Markkanen, Consul General of Finland wrote describing how "Petteri, Juho and Samuli founded Sibelius Piano Trio a few years ago, and catapulted to success on the European concert stage. When three international soloists of this caliber unite to form a chamber music ensemble, the results are predictably electric. These three friends love playing together, and this love is easy to hear.

"Petteri lived in Los Angeles for several years while studying with Hagai Shaham at Thornton School of Music at USC, and he has close family here. Yarlung had worked with Petteri to record his now legendary albums *Art of the Violin* and *Art of the Sonata* with Canadian pianist Kevin Fitz-Gerald, released on CD and on vinyl. Juho has performed often in Los Angeles, once with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, three times with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and once in our home for a LACO event which we very much enjoyed.

Recorded in Samueli Theater at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, March 30, 2016

Executive Producers: Ann and Bill Harmsen

Recording Engineers: Bob Attiyeh & Arian Jansen
Mastering Engineers: Steve Hoffman & Bob Attiyeh
Vinyl Mastering: Bernie Grundman

Microphone Preamplification: Elliot Midwood
SonoruS ATR12 analog tape recorder
EMTEC 468 tape

AKG C24 microphone: Ancona Audio
Steinway technician: Kathy Smith
Graphic Layout: MikeDesign
Cover photo: Midnight Sun, Lake Kuhmo, Finland: Hagai Shaham
Sibelius Piano Trio (l to r) Petteri, Juho & Samuli:
Cooper Bates photography

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180 Gram 45 RPM Vinyl
Made in Germany

Sibelius Piano Trio

Petteri Iivonen, violin
Juho Pohjonen, piano
Samuli Peltonen, cello

"*Ruminations* and *Nene* were audience favorites at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, where the Trio gave their premieres. As a proud Finn and as a representative of the Finnish government, I salute Sibelius Piano Trio for their talent. Petteri, Juho and Samuli embody and exemplify the best of our country, and as someone who lives in Los Angeles, it gives me great pleasure that the Trio is so intimately connected with California and Yarlung Records."

-J.P. Markkanen, Consul General of Finland

<i>Nene</i>	Diego Schicci
<i>I Jumping on the walls, Energico</i>	
<i>II Dozing on a hanger, Onirico, ritmico ma non preciso</i>	
<i>III Riding a mosquito, Scherzando</i>	
<i>IV Oozing away, Con brio, nervoso / Calmo, rubato</i>	
<i>Ruminations</i>	David S. Lefkowitz

Petteri called from Finland one night and told me he and two friends had formed Sibelius Piano Trio, and that they wanted to make their debut album with Yarlung Records. These three friends happened to be Juho Pohjonen, Petteri Iivonen and Samuli Peltonen, three successful international soloists in their own rights, balancing schedules of concerto performances with orchestra tours and solo recitals. As J.P. Markkanen observed in his introduction, the musical power three performers of this caliber can unleash when they play together is magnetic and palpable.

Many thanks to Raulee Marcus, Stephen A. Block and Leslie Lassiter for underwriting *Nene*, and Randy & Linda Bellous, Jess Morton, Leon & Ikee Hasserjian, Stratton-Petit Foundation, Linda Attiyeh, Rinchen Lhamo and Alex Shapiro for underwriting *Ruminations*.

This album proudly bears the seal and endorsement of the Los Angeles and Orange County Audio Society. President Mike Wechsberg, Chairman Robert Levi and the society's multi-year collaboration with Yarlung have enabled joint concerts and recordings to reach larger audiences; indeed many on Yarlung's technical team and board of directors are members of the Audio Society. Yarlung musicians join us in expressing our thanks.

Petteri, Juho, Samuli and I very much appreciate Salesforce as well as Ann and Bill Harmsen for underwriting the vinyl release of this music. The Harmsens have underwritten previous Yarlung LPs, including *Sophisticated Lady Jazz Quartet*, and Salesforce.org supports us every year at Yarlung with critical database infrastructure. Kudos and thanks to this extraordinary team. One can also hear this repertoire on analog tape and digitally recorded formats including DSD, most of the download and streaming formats, and compact disc.

-Bob Attiyeh, producer

Diego Schissi's *Nene*... opens with a terrific, offbeat dance. It radiates gusto, with tricky rhythms and much pizzicato. Listen to a background of quiet pizzicato across which runs a dream-like cello line.... David Lefkowitz's *Ruminations* calls up images of Middle East dances and what might be a folksy Yiddish extemporisation, desperately melancholy and introverted. Recordings like this don't just happen.

-Neville Cohn, *NewOZartsreview*, Australia

[Pianist Juho Pohjonen] is distinguished by deep sensitivity and lucid insights. Like him, violinist Petteri Iivonen (b. 1987) and cellist Samuli Peltonen (b. 1981) have won top prizes in national and international competitions, and used them to launch international careers. Iivonen is actually famed Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho's violinist of choice for her *Violin Concerto*, which is saying quite a lot.

-Jason Victor Serinus, *Stereophile*

Diego Schissi's clever and engaging *Nene* uses soothing harmonies, delicate instrumental interplay, and intricate rhythms that bounce merrily along to create an air of insouciant activity; slower sections offset the predominant busily repeating figurations with meditative calm. David Lefkowitz's *Ruminations* is a rhapsody that explores exotic melisma and nasal, at times acrid timbres (with the strings mimicking Middle Eastern winds and ouds, the piano strummed like a plucked lyre) to convey effusions both ecstatic and lamenting. The Sibelius Trio plays with absolute technical security and impeccable tonal polish, traversing this large expanse of musical territory without missing a step. Yarlung's recording, is, as usual, the epitome of sonic realism.

-Mark Lehman, *The Absolute Sound*



YARLUNG RECORDS
BOB ATIYEH, PRODUCER

YAR944225-638V

