

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FROM FINLAND WITH LOVE: SONGS OF MY GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER  
ALL-SIBELIUS CONCERT IN PORTLAND BY TWO FINNISH PERFORMERS MARCH 20;  
CELLIST JUSSI MAKKONEN AND PIANIST RUUSAMARI TEPPU**

Portland, Oregon, March 3, 2015 – To celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Finnish composer Jean Sibelius, two young Finnish musicians, cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Ruusamari Teppo, will perform an all-Sibelius concert from 7:30-9:30pm on Friday, March 20 at West Hills Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 8470 SW Oleson Road, Portland 97223. Teppo is the great-great-granddaughter of Sibelius.

Tickets are \$15, available at the door or in advance on the Scandinavian Heritage Foundation website at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/from-finland-with-love-all-sibelius-concert-tickets-15952063050>.

Sponsored by Finlandia Foundation National, as well as the local Columbia-Pacific Chapter, with support from the Scandinavian Heritage Foundation, the concert features: the Karelia Suite, op.11; Romance, op.24/9; Impromptu op 5/5; Drommen (Dream), op 13/5; Souvenir, op. 99/3; and The Tempest, op 109/2 in an unpublished arrangement by Sibelius' son-in-law, Jussi Jalas.

**The performers**

Ruusamari (Rosa) Teppo began playing piano when she was five. She studied music in Paris with Konstantin Bogino, at the Prague Conservatory and Liszt Academy of Music (Budapest). Since 2001 she has been studying for a doctorate in music at the University of North Texas with Van Cliburn winner Vladimir Viardo, and is an instructor at the Music Institute of North Texas. She is the pianist for the University of North Texas Symphony Orchestra and the Richardson Symphony. Teppo has performed as a soloist and chamber musician in many European countries, South Africa and the U.S., as well as on radio here and in Finland. As a direct descendent of Sibelius, Teppo performs many of his works, including unpublished, early chamber compositions.

Jussi Makkonen has been playing the cello since he was seven. He was Finland's candidate for the Eurovision Young Musicians competition in 1996 and was a member of the EU Youth Orchestra and Gustav Mahler Orchestra before earning a Master's degree in music from the Sibelius Academy. Makkonen has performed the music of Sibelius throughout Finland, the rest of Europe, much of Asia and the US.

## Reaching Young Audiences

Makkonen is passionate about teaching classical music, especially Sibelius, to young people. He created and scripted a narrative school concert, featuring the music of Sibelius and Oskar Merikanto, that has been presented to a total audience of nearly 300,000 Finnish students, many of whom had never heard classical music before. This year Finland's Ministry of Education is distributing a Sibelius-themed children's book accompanied by a CD featuring Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azezian to all Finnish elementary schools.

For more information about the March 20 Sibelius concert by Makkonen and Teppo in Portland, log onto the websites of Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter, [www.ffcpc.info/](http://www.ffcpc.info/) or the Scandinavian Heritage Foundation, [www.scanheritage.org](http://www.scanheritage.org) or call the Scandinavian Heritage Foundation at (503) 977-0275.

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### *Photo Caption:*

*Cellist Jussi Makkonen and Pianist Ruusamari (Rosa) Teppo, great-great-granddaughter of Finnish composer Jean Sibelius, perform an all Sibelius concert on Friday, March 20 in Portland from 7:30-9:30pm at West Hills Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 8470 SW Oleson Road 97223. The concert is sponsored by Finlandia Foundation National and Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter, with support from the Scandinavian Heritage Foundation. Tickets available at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/from-finland-with-love-all-sibelius-concert-tickets-15952063050>*

### **Links for music and discography of Jussi Makkonen:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oBQZGGuB2wA>  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/CellistJussiMakkonen>  
<http://jussimakkonen.com/en/>