

Naftule And His Majesty

Symphonic Poetry by Helmut Eisel

Track 1

Ooh my head!

What a celebration. It was Princess Verles 18th birthday. I am Pino - and this is the Royal Orchestra of Sinfonia. Have you ever heard of Sinfonia?; ... Well, I didn't expect someone to know Sinfonia as it is far, far away! Sinfonia is a wonderful place and the Sinfonians really nice people. No one is talking in Sinfonia, because a long time ago the Sinfonians noticed, that they often argue when they talk, but when they play music, they understand each other very well. Well - Sinfonia...Everyone is a virtuoso on his/her instrument, no one speaks a word.! In spite of that -or because of this - the communication/understanding is great/very well

You don't believe that this is possible? Hold on (to the flautist) "How do you say "Do you want to go for a walk with me?"

See...And this is "YES" in Sinfonia: (trumpet)

(to the 3rd trombonist) And now I am asking the trombone: And how would you say: I couldn't be bothered going for a walk. Leave me alone. Get lost (Trombonist plays)

That's clear enough, don't you think?! And you (to the viola) - can you tell me how long you practiced your violin yesterday?

Oh-sorry!

This is not a violin - it's a viola, a bigger violin, sounding a wee bit lower! You notice: with an instrument you can say anything!-if you practice long enough. If you have problems understanding the musicians -just ask me - Pino - I'll help you.

(He points at the conductor.) This lad prefers neither to talk or play... He lets the others play! He controls the others!!!!!!! He is the conductor and he represents the Royal Orchestra of Sinfonia:

You see: These musicians all play exactly what is written on that sheet music. No musician in Sinfonia would play without sheet music. Never! And you know who rules over the music?

Right! King Waldemar. Kind, just, nice and always perfectly organised/arranged. That is why he is well respected by the people of Sinfonia

I don't know why, but some-times he sounds like this...

Sad, isn't it? Why? I ask him: (to the king) King Waldemar, this Orchestra is only playing carefully arranged music, note by note? (double bass: YES)

Right. And none of your musicians just plays what just comes into his head - improvising? - like a Klezmer does, a jewish wandering musician (db YES). But then everything is fine. But why are you so sad then?

He is worried about his daughter. I don't understand that! Princess Verle is pleasant and clever and ... (music stops) (flushing) ... really really beautiful - very pretty! And she knows it - look how she is flirting with the guys from the orchestra.

(to piccolo) shhhhhhhhhhh!!! Look! The boys are really flirting with her, But as far as I know they are too late. Verle is going to get married in the next few days

A celebration again...

And the happy groom won't be one of the gentlemen here. It is count Pjotr from the far off land of Transsinfonia!

Track 2

The fun-loving Veerle and the posh count... very interesting...hm, I think they are made for each other (ironically), they are so different... And soon (rubbing his hands) there'll be a wedding!

(clarinet) What is that? Who are you?

(translating) Klezmerim? Wedding musicians?

Your inner voice has led you here - because a princess is getting married?!

You are the best Klezmer Band in the country!? And you want to play on the princess' wedding? Klezmerim? Impossible! This is THE dream wedding of Sinfonia! Everything is carefully arranged! Just look at you - how you are dressed (cl) Sorry? Pardon? What are you saying about my nose?

Wells! You have to know: Klezmer are not very popular in Sinfonia because they are not as "arranged" as the people in Sinfonia. Not with the notation and not with the duets and well, in general..

(Clar interrupts) Sorry? (cl) Not in front of the children!...

(cl) You're going to play something to Waldemar and Veerle.

(cl) You have composed this especially for them... My nose is telling me: You might as well play it to the rabbits

(laughs)

(cl) Sorry?? What are you saying? There is something in my face – something BIG? What is it?

(cl) N O S E... Nose. My nose? Impertinent! (cl is laughing and plays to Waldemar and Veerle)

{Klezmer Trio play (King Waldmenars Nigum, melody line is taken over by Waldemar and Veerle)}

Track 3 – no text

Track 4

{before music starts:} Verle and Waldemar seem to like this melody, don't you think? Those three are getting on well. Well, then the orchestra should also... (is interrupted by whistle "trillerpfeife")

After Stopp: Oh! The orchestra is protesting (against?)- this never happened in Sinfonia before. How will Waldemar react? He is the King!

{Thinking/meditating:} The Klezmer play in the holes...? (Music stopps) What does he mean? I don't understand.

Waldemar is cutting holes into the sheet music with his scissors. I can't believe this/ Can you believe that?- I have never seen something like that before.

Track 5

{before music starts:} Congratulation, Naftule! Sinfonia is accepting a Klezmer band at the Princess Wedding - unbelievable!

Talking while the music starts, disbelievingly: What are you saying?.. How lovely Veerle looks. How pretty her smile is... Hey, what has happened to you? (while the music plays comments like: ojoj, I understand, he is head over heels....etc.)

Track 6

(while music is playing (A), to the audience) Attracted by the festive fanfare everyone in Sinfonia attends the wedding. The Klezmer play while the couple and the party walk down the aisle: First King Waldemar, Princess Veerle and count Pjotr, then one after the other the royal orchestra...

You will now take part in a Sinfonian wedding. The king will ask Pjotr and then Veerle to promise to love each other and care for each other and only play duets with each other and no one else until the instrument is silent forever. And as you know: (Wait till the music stopps) A sinfonic "Yes" sounds like that.

Track 7

Dreaming, (doting): What a ceremony! I am stunned!

You as well... (appaled) Hold on- stunned - because of Veerle?

You would like to .. play a DUET with her? Tell me, are you crazy? She is the future Queen of Sinfonia, and you - you are a scruffy/peasant Klezmer!

What do you mean: She doesn't love him? You inner voice says that the last word hasn't been spoken? Waldemar has arranged this wedding carefully. Like everything in Sinfonia! This is how we do it here!

Such an arrangement doesn't mean anything to you? ...- To caress the rounded curves of her body with clarinet notes... You can't fancy/flirt with the princess here!

What? – Be careful? - What is it? (cl: NOSE) What, my nose? - Cheeky devil! (cl. laughs)
Stop laughing, do your work: The guests want to dance...

Track 8

And now: the first duet of our newly weds! And as you know: from now on they are only allowed to play duets with each other. Pjotr asked for an especially romantic duet arrangement for this night... They are probably both very nervous;; I hope they can enjoy it as well.

And he is gone!

Offended! They didn't follow the arrangement!

What is Veerle saying? I could love him, but I need –

What is it I need? ... Fun? Passion?

(1st fermata) "No arrangement -
(2nd fermata) "but true/real emotions!"

Listen: Naftule, Veerle... Stop it... You can't do that!

For Gods sake! That's just not on! Duet with a Klezmer - on the wedding night!!!

You wish Pjotr was as passionate -Ach Veerle, that's all over now!

Track 9

For heavens sake!The royal guards. They arrest Naftule and Veerle - and throw them in the dungeon...

I warned him! A duet with Princess Veerle -on her wedding night. They will flog them! Waldemar is going to take their instruments. They won't be allowed to play again - ever!

(Translates Klezmer- Guitar and Bass and points at Pjotr) Ha! The "arranged man"!- Are you happy now?

(Translating guitar and bass) No? Why not?

(translating bassoon simultaneously) My father has arranged this with King Waldemar. I didn't want this, but I have to obey my father. And I really and truly love Verle, and now everyone is unhappy!

The poor guy... And Naftule and Veerle are stuck in the dungeon

They are shaking and they are frightened! How will they be punished? Whipped? Or have their instruments taken away?

Track 10

Listen to the Kings verdict

After Waldemar described the situation, he asks if anyone has anything to say in mitigation for Naftule and Veerle. Everyone is surprised that it is Pjotr who says that he doesn't want the both to be punished.

If Veerle loves this Klezmer, then the arrangement was a mistake - he says. And I think Sinfonia is arranging too much anyway! The Sinfonians don't know what to do, but then...

Waldemar is raging/ furious "Sinfonians! You are being childish! Does everyone here think that we arrange too much? (Waldemar childlike) (You think) we don't need arrangements?!"

He says: Well then, lets see how well we get on without arrangement...

You see, Waldemar said: we can't play without arrangement in Sinfonia: No music and we need arrangements in our lives as well. I am sorry to have to punish them...

(After music stops.) Veerle, my only daughter, and Naftule, the Klezmer- Come here, this is the last chance for you to play! After that you have to give your instruments away - forever.

Track 11

(translates Naftule) You see Waldemar, says Naftule. It is possible without arrangement; We can sing and play wonderfully together

And when we play we only need to transpose our inner voice onto the instrument. We are singing on our instruments!

(Translates Waldemar) It is important to listen to our inner voice! ... We sing on our instruments with and without arrangement: Sinfonians sing and Klezmer sing on their instruments...

My wedding arrangement without the inner voice of Veerle was a mistake! You are free and can keep your instruments.

Naftule notices how Veerle and Pjotr look into each others eyes deeply in love and he knows that it is time for him to go once again. He is a wee bit sad. No - he is very sad!

Everyone now lives happily and peacefully in Sinfonia. Veerle and Pjotr have 3 children so far. Sarah plays English horn, David Cello and Aaron, the oldest son, clarinet. Nobody in Pjotrs or Veerles family has played the clarinet so far, and everyone is happy when Naftule visits them from time to time and shows Aaron the well liked klezmer techniques. And Pjotr is a lot more relaxed and not as stuffy as he was before!

(Bassoon interrupts) Hello! - Be careful! What is that?

PINO: What is it? ??????????????????

(Bn plays NOSE) N O .. Nose...You cheeky...!! And this me...

(Orchestra interrupts!)