



Sebastian Hilli:

## Reachings (2014)

**Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra,**  
**cond. André de Ridder**

Recorded at Helsinki Music Centre,  
on 1 February, 2017

by **Anna-Kaisa Kemppi**

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## Sebastian Hilli

The often abstract themes in the works of Sebastian Hilli (b. 1990, Helsinki) share his fascination for structure and the relationship between non-musical concepts and their transcription into musical ideas. Known for his highly intensive, crisply structured works, he chooses subjects ranging from the literature of Jorge Luis Borges to works inspired by biology and the psychological expectations of the human mind.

Winning the first prize in the Toru Takemitsu Composition Award in 2015 brought Hilli international recognition. Several of his works have been performed at festivals in Finland and abroad: Norway, Austria, the United States, Japan, Denmark, Germany, Ukraine and elsewhere. Upcoming projects include commissions for the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and a large-scale composition for the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and a choir of 500 singers to be premiered in November 2017.

Sebastian Hilli holds a Master's degree in composition from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, where he studied with Veli-Matti Puumala and Lauri Kilpiö. He is currently working as a freelancer on a three-year grant from the Finnish Cultural Foundation.

[www.sebastianhilli.com](http://www.sebastianhilli.com)

## Reachings

In contrast to what is typical for me, I did not have a strict, fixed structure while working on *Reachings* (2014). Instead, I progressed narratively, sensing what kind of music would next materialise. The form of the music thus emerged gradually. In building the dramaturgy, I often adopted the listener's viewpoint. Sensing how the music was advancing, I developed the idea of reaching out for something, and this became the central theme of the piece.

What interested me was the feeling born within us as we hear the music drawing closer. My approach to *Reachings* was that of being on a journey to somewhere without knowing where. It creates a feeling that the music is nearing its destination, but just as it reaches the point it is striving towards, it is suddenly drawn back or takes a new turn.

*Reachings* was the winner of the first prize in the Toru Takemitsu Composition Award 2015 in Tokyo, Japan.