

SPECIMEN PAPER

Part II Paper 13: The Shadow of Sibelius

Answer **three** questions, with **at least one** from each section

SECTION A

1) 'We recognise [the melodies] as our own, even though we had never heard them before.'

Discuss this statement by Oscar Merikanto from his review of *Kullervo*, and assess its relevance to Sibelius's music before the gaining of Finnish independence in 1917.

2) From the First Symphony's finale, *Quasi una Fantasia* to the original title of the Seventh Symphony, *Fantasia Sinfonica*, Sibelius seems to have equivocated about the appropriate genre of some of his works. Are there two such distinct types of musical thinking in his music?

3) **Either:**

a) 'His symphonies, then, though subjective in mood, are free from the tautological emotional repetitions of romantic music cast in the classic mould.' (Constant Lambert, *Music Ho!* 1934)

Discuss this statement in the context of Sibelius's symphonies.

or

b) 'The form arises from the content in a different way from that of works cast in the classical mould or palpable derivations from it.' (J.H. Elliot, 1931). Discuss this statement in the context of Sibelius's tone-poems.

4) Contrary to French Impressionism as epitomized by Debussy, Sibelius's music has, according to Adorno, only 'dull, rigid, and accidental colour' in which there is 'no palette: everything is only tints'. Consider these comments in the light of Sibelius's handling of the orchestra and his use of sonority.

SECTION B

5) 'Whereas most other modern composers are engaged in manufacturing cocktails of every hue and description, I offer the public pure cold water.' (Sibelius, cited in Cecil Gray, *Sibelius: The Symphonies*, 1931) In describing his own 6th Symphony in this way, what does Sibelius reveal about his relationship with his contemporaries in the 1920s and 1930s?

6) **Either:** a) 'For me, the crucial aspect of his work remains his conception of *continuity*' (Magnus Lindberg, in interview, 1993). Consider ways in which this aspect of Sibelius's work has influenced later composers.

Or b) 'Rediscovering balance might be a force for renewal.' (Magnus Lindberg, in interview, 1993) Consider how the example of Sibelius's work might have been of use to later composers in achieving such a balance, making use of specific examples to support your argument.