

# Finlandia

*For other uses, see [Finlandia \(disambiguation\)](#).*

**Finlandia** is a [symphonic poem](#) by the [Finnish composer Jean Sibelius](#). He wrote it in [1899](#) and made some changes to it the next year. "Finlandia" is the [Latin](#) name for Finland. At the time Sibelius wrote it, Finland was called the "Grand Duchy of Finland". This was because it was being ruled by [Russia](#). The Finnish people wanted to rule Finland for themselves. The music was composed for a [pageant](#) to encourage the Finnish people to work for freedom.

The music of *Finlandia* is exciting and dramatic. It sounds like the Finnish people struggling to be free. Towards the end the music becomes calm and a lovely tune is played. It is a hymn tune which became known as *Finlandia*. Many years later Sibelius set some words to this hymn and it is often sung as a separate piece by a choir. The words were written by [Veikko Antero Koskenniemi](#). It has become Finland's best known song and almost feels like a second Finnish [national anthem](#). It is often sung as a hymn in [Christian](#) churches to the words "Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side". The tune was also used as the national anthem of the short-lived [African](#) country [Biafra](#).

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