

# Jean Sibelius

(Jahn Sib-ay-lee-uhs)

1865 – 1957



- Sibelius was born in 1865 in Hämeenlinna in the Grand Duchy of Finland
- His aunt taught him piano when he was seven years old.
- His uncle gave him a violin when he was 10 years old.
- Sibelius studied at the Helsinki Music Institute (now the Sibelius Academy) from 1885 to 1889.
- His patriotic song, *Song of the Athenians* immediately brought Sibelius the status of a national hero.
- In addition to his 7 symphonies, Sibelius' best-known compositions are *Finlandia*, the *Karelia Suite*, *Valse triste*, his Violin Concerto, the choral symphony *Kullervo*, and *The Swan of Tuonela* (from the *Lemminkäinen Suite*).
- Sibelius composed prolifically until the mid-1920s, but suddenly stopped composing major works in his last 30 years.
- He is widely recognized as his country's greatest composer, and his music is often credited with having helped Finland develop a national identity during its struggle for independence from Russia.



Listen to  
*Finlandia*