

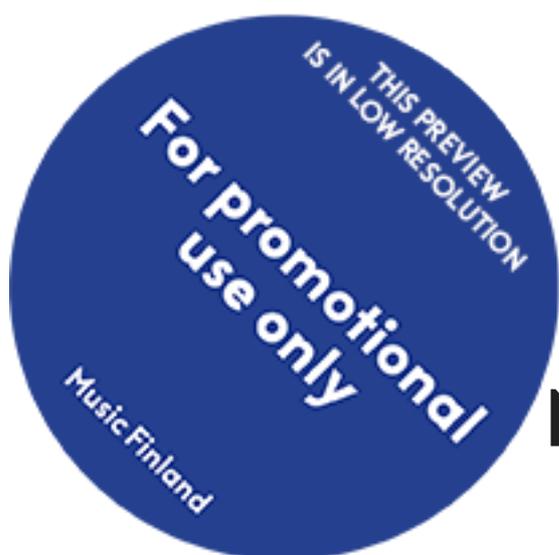
Leevi Räsänen

# Lukija

Reader

for violoncello and piano

2026



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*Leevi Räsänen*

*Lukija*  
*reader*

*for violoncello & piano*



2026

# Leevi Räsänen: *Lukija* *for violoncello & piano*

## Movements

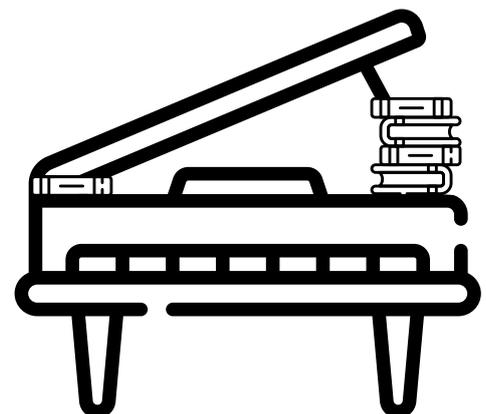
- I. Keski (~1'30")
- II. Herpa (~3')
- III. Houku (~3'30")
- IV. Senti (~3')
- Bonus: Enari (1')

The movements can be performed consecutively or separately between other pieces of a larger programme. The movements of the work can be grouped together in any combination, for example, I + II, III + IV and Bonus as an encore. The bonus need not be performed every time the piece is performed – hence the name '*Bonus*'. Different versions of the silent movement I. exist for performances where *Lukija* starts the concert (or continues it after an intermission) and for other programme orders.

## Equipment

Both players need one book to perform the piece. The book can be any book, but it should have enough pages to enable repeated audible flipping of pages, i.e. a very thin book won't work. The performers are encouraged to consider whether they would prefer to choose a book based on personal preference or to make a statement and send a message.

The pianist should have a pile of books prepared on the floor next to the piano, ready to be lifted on top of the piano. The number of books determines the tempo of certain bars of the movement. The pianist should use a small table or high chair to hold the books. Spiral-bound books will not work. The book is left open on the piano for the duration of the parts of the piece.



## Gestures and movements



Gestures and movements are notated with text and symbols on a one-line staff marked with a book clef, above the instrumental staves of the cello and piano.



Flip book pages forward. Amount and intensity of sound are specified in the score.



Flip book pages backward.



Closed book / browse pages until the book is closed, context-dependent.



Open book



Lay the book on the side table (cello) or piano, closed.



Lay the book down, open.



Read the book normally, showing your face.



Cover your face with the book, holding it very close to your face.



Peek from behind the book, showing your eyes but not your nose.



Hold the closed book in front of you.



Hold the book upside down in front of your face with one hand.

Hold the book in the correct orientation in front of your face with one

hand, hold the book at arm's length with your left hand, looking at it.

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Smack the book on the table / piano.



**Pianist:** read the book from very close, hiding your face partially.



**Cellist:** hold the cello in playing position and read the book while holding it in your right hand.



**Pianist:** move books from the pile on the front side of the piano to the back side, creating a new pile.

Passages notated without metre are notated with the "X" time signature. A relative notation of durations ranging from longest to shortest (◉ ◊ ●) is used in these passages. A suggested approximation of the duration of these bars is given in seconds at the start of each bar without metre.

The bpm **metronome markings** are approximate and can fluctuate during the music.

When no instruction about **vibrato** is provided, context-dependent natural-sounding vibrato should be used. For the double stop fifths of the cello, no vibrato is suggested.



## Microtonal notation

♭	♭	♭	↑	↓	↓	♯	↑	♯	♯	♯	♯	♯
-150	-133	-100	-67	-50	-33	0	+33	+50	+67	+100	+133	+150

Quarter tones and sixth tones are used in the piece. Quarter tones ( $\pm 50\text{¢}$ ) are marked with standard quarter tone accidentals and sixth tones ( $\pm 33\text{¢}$ ) with arrows.

The most common types of harmonies used in this piece are:

- chords based on the 11th harmonic (quarter tone accidentals)



- chords built from two pure fifths, a septimal minor third apart (sixth tones notated with arrows)



A septimal minor third is defined as the interval between the 6th and 7th harmonic of the harmonic series, and it is  $267\text{¢}$ . That is  $33\text{¢}$  (= a sixth tone) lower than the twelve-tone equal temperament minor third at  $300\text{¢}$ .

- the septimal minor third by itself (sixth tones notated with arrows)



- the harmonic seventh by itself (sixth tones notated with arrows)



capacity to produce microtones, the cello is always tuned in  
 posed to be perceived – as the fundamental of the chords (where  
 rointerval (where cello is tuned higher, to create this illusion).



# säveltäjältä

*Lukijan* keskiössä on kirja objektina, joka kulkee ihmisen mukana joskus pitkiäkin aikoja. Viivakoodinlukijan piippauksesta kirjastossa tai kaupassa alkunsa saava kirjan matka vaihtelee hetken selailusta kokonaiseen elämään ja voi jatkua jopa sukupolvien yli. Mitä kaikkea kirjaan voikaan tallentua tai latautua, sen kulkiessa ihmisen matkassa?

Ihmiskunnan ja yksilöiden historia on tallennettu kirjoihin. Ne ovat kiinnostavia esineitä, jotka voivat olla yhtä aikaa äärimmäisen yksityisiä ja perustavanlaatuisen jaettuina, yhteisöllisiä. Yksilön kirjaamat ajatukset voivat paisua sukupolvikokemuksiksi, identiteettiä rakentaviksi ilmiöiksi. Toisaalta jokainen lukukokemus on erilainen ja lukijansa oma. Lukeminen voidaan nähdä intiiminä toimintona, joka sulkee ympäröivän maailman lukijan ulkopuolelle. Mutta mitkä asiat rikkovat keskittyneen lukemisen? Se, että esitys alkaa? Huomio voi herpaantua, kun kuulee tarpeeksi kovan äänen ja joskus kirjan lukemisen keskeyttäminen näyttäytyy suorastaan törkeänä...

Kirja on kuitenkin luonteeltaan taideteos, jonka kokeminen jää jatkuvasti kesken. Myös *Lukija*-teoksen osat ovat lyhyitä ja miniatyyrimäisiä, kesken jäävän tuntuisia, kuten niiden otsikotkin. Keskeytyminen pakottaa sulattelemaan ja pohtimaan sisältöjä rauhakseen. Tämä poikkeaa esimerkiksi yhtäjaksoisista näyttämö- tai musiikkiteoksista, jotka lähtökohtaisesti koetaan aikaan sidottuina. Toisaalta, kirjakin voi imaista intensiivisesti mukaansa ja viedä lukijansa tunteiden ja kokemusten pyörteeseen hetkellisesti, tai joissain tapauksessa, kirjan loppuun saakka.

Lukija on sellisti **Eeva Rysän** ja pianisti **Ilmo Rannan** tilaus. Eeva Rysä ja Ilmo Ranta kantaesittivät teoksen **Tampere Biennale** -festivaalilla 17.4.2026.



# composer's note

The main subject of *Lukija (Reader)* is the book as an object that can accompany a person for long stretches of time. The journey of a book begins with the beep of a barcode scanner in a library or shop, and it may range from a brief browsing to a lifetime, even extending across generations. What gets stored in a book as it travels alongside a human life?

The history of humanity and of individuals has been recorded in books. They are compelling objects, at once powerfully intimate and fundamentally shared in nature. Thoughts written down by an individual can expand into generational experiences and identity-shaping phenomena. At the same time, every reading experience is unique and belongs to its reader. Reading can be seen as an intimate act that closes off the surrounding world. Yet what disrupts a focused reader? The beginning of the performance? Attention may falter at a sufficiently loud sound, and at times, the act of interrupting one's reading can feel outrageous...

A book, however, is by nature a work of art that the reader is constantly forced to interrupt. The movements of *Lukija* are likewise brief, miniature in scale, fragmentary in character, as their titles suggest. Interruptions force the reader to pause and think about what they have read. This differs from continuous stage or concert works, which are generally experienced as bound in time. On the other hand, a book can draw the reader in with great intensity and carry them into a flow of emotion and experience, momentarily or, in some cases, all the way to its final page.

*Lukija* was commissioned by cellist **Eeva Rysä** and pianist **Ilmo Ranta**. The premiere was given by Eeva Rysä and Ilmo Ranta at the **Tampere Biennale** festival of contemporary music on 17 April 2026.



Lukija was commissioned by cellist Eeva Rysä and pianist Ilmo Ranta, for whom the work is dedicated. The commission was kindly supported by the Teosto Commissioning Grant Committee.

Lukija was premiered at the Tampere Biennale on Friday 17 April, 2026.

The piece work of Leevi Räsänen was supported by the Kone Foundation at the time of writing this piece.

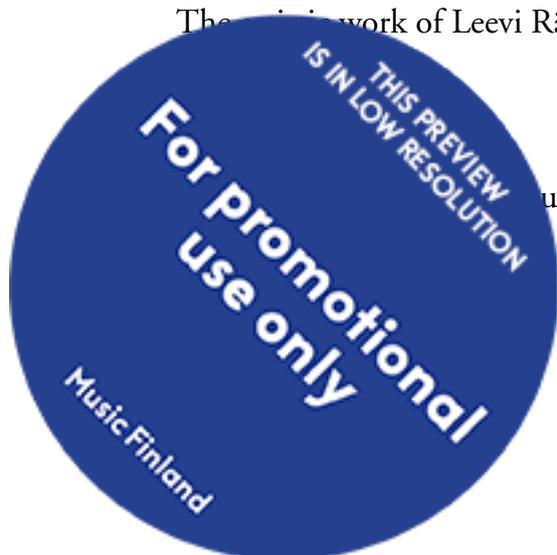
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for Eeva Rysä & Ilmo Ranta

# Lukija

## Reader

I. Keski

Leevi Räsänen 2026

### Option 1 – "Reader" is the first piece in the programme:

**Both:** Enter the stage reading a book, holding the book with both hands. You can, and should, turn pages at any point of the movement. The cello should already be on the stage and tuned.

Go stand next to your instrument/chair, still reading the book.

Bow slowly, still holding the book and reading.

Stand for a while, facing the audience, reading.

Sit down on your chair / instrument and read for a moment.

Simultaneously look to the audience, away from the book, with a neutral expression. Continue reading. Turn 1 page. Look to audience again, this time, covering your face with the open book. Return to reading position.

Slowly bring the book closer to your face, until your nose touches the pages and the book hides your face. Hold this position. The **cellist** should have their book in the **correct orientation**, while the **pianist** should have the book *upside down*.

### Option 2 – "Reader" is performed mid-programme:

**Both:** Prepare books of your choice on a side table or chair close to you.

Pick up these books simultaneously and slowly raise them to your eye level, in front of your faces. Read for a moment. You can, and should, turn pages at any point of the movement.

Stand up next to your instrument/chair, still reading the book.

Bow slowly, still holding the books and reading.

Stand for a while, facing the audience, reading.

Sit down on your chair/instrument and read for a moment.

Simultaneously look to the audience, away from the book, with a neutral expression. Continue reading. Turn 1 page. Look to audience again, this time, covering your face with the open book.

Slowly bring the book closer to your face, until your nose touches the pages and the book hides your face. Hold this position. The **cellist** should have their book in the **correct orientation**, while the **pianist** should have the book *upside down*.

End of movement II. *attacca* or continue programme with other pieces.



# II. Herpa

10" 6"  $\text{♩} 56$  4"  $\frac{4}{4}$

Violoncello

browse big jumps to random pages

$\text{mp}$  flip many pages audibly in given rhythm hold with L.H.

Piano

6  $\text{♩} 56$   $\frac{4}{4}$  5"  $\text{♩} 56$   $\frac{4}{4}$  8"  $\text{♩} 56$   $\frac{2}{4}$

non vib. arco  $\text{ppp}$  on table, single pages  $f$  *espress. sonore* vib. ord. ad lib.  $p$

play with R.H. while holding book with L.H.  $\text{pp}$   $f$   $p$

sempre con ped. libero

many pages 11  $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{4}{4}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{2}{4}$

on table  $f$   $\text{ff}$   $\text{ff}$   $\text{ff}$



15  $\text{♩} 72$   $\text{♩} 56$

(continue triplet rhythm) *mp sub.* *libero espress.*

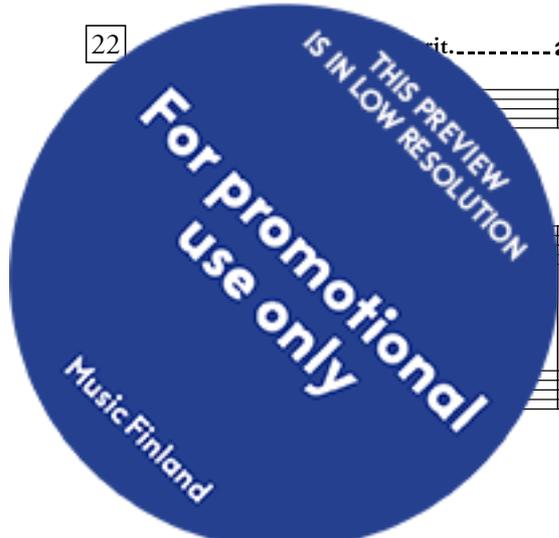
(continue same rhythms) *mp sub.*

19

*f* *p* *mf*

22 rit..... a tempo *non vib. arco* poco rit..... a tempo rit.....

*loco* *8ba*



25 **slower** ♩ 42

*p*

*n*

*p sub.*

face towards the piano

turn to the audience

to piano

to audience

27 (non vib.) flautando

*pp*

*ppp*

una corda

29 25"

*p*

flip multiple pages, audibly

*mp*

*f*

*fff*

control volume of flipping with the number of pages and speed

flip until the end of the book

look to the cellist



### III. Houku

each bar ca. 6"

Violoncello

read idly  
pizz.(L.H.)  
0 0

play pizzicati sparsely with L.H. while reading

hold book in R.H.

look at the book's back

long notes con vib.  
pizz. ord.

Piano

hold book, face towards piano

look to audience

all pages

all pages

6 56

bring book closer to eyes

further...

to pile on floor

non vib. arco

p

11

con vib.

f p f sub. pp sub. mf

f p f sub. pp sub.



16 non vib.

*p* *poco più*

20

*mp* *8va.* *loco* *f*

24 con vib. ad lib.

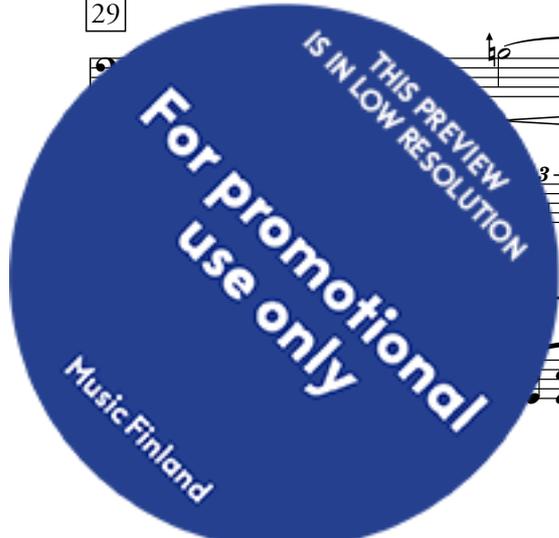
*mp sub.* *pp sub.* *mf* *ppp* *f sub.*

*mp sub.* *mf* *pp sub.* *f sub.*

8va. 8va.

29

*p* *mf* *ff sub.*



34

ppp mf > mf > ppp mf

mp sub. f sub. p mf

Detailed description: This system contains measures 34 through 38. The top staff is a single melodic line with various dynamics: ppp, mf, mf, ppp, and mf. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. The right hand has chords and some melodic fragments, with dynamics mp sub., f sub., p, and mf. The left hand has a steady accompaniment with triplets and dynamics mf and p.

39

ord. to harm. gradually

non vib. f pp poco ppp

p ppp 8va

Detailed description: This system contains measures 39 through 43. The top staff features a melodic line with dynamics f, pp, and ppp. It includes a dynamic marking 'non vib.' and a performance instruction 'ord. to harm. gradually' with a first ending bracket. The piano accompaniment has a right hand with a melodic line and a left hand with triplets and octaves. Dynamics include p and ppp. An '8va' marking is present in the right hand.

44

(sempre non vib.)

Detailed description: This system contains measures 44 through 48. The top staff is a melodic line with the instruction '(sempre non vib.)'. The piano accompaniment has a right hand with chords and a left hand with triplets. The system ends with a double bar line.



# IV. Senti

3"  $\text{♩} 72$

Violoncello

arco (non dim.) **"ff"**

**fff** furioso, molto sonore

Piano

move the book pile from the floor to the top of the piano **"ff"** forcefully **"ff"**

8

light finger tapping on surface of page **"p"**

**fff**

**ff** **mf** **p dolce**

poco accel..... faster  $\text{♩} 85$

**"p"** carefully

repeat until all books are moved

sempre Chopin-esquely slightly off-rhythm, chords can sometimes be arpeggiated ad lib.

**ff** **mp**

**p**

**f brightly** L.H.

R.H.



26

ppp mf p f p

mp dolce f mp

32

f p dolce poco p dolce

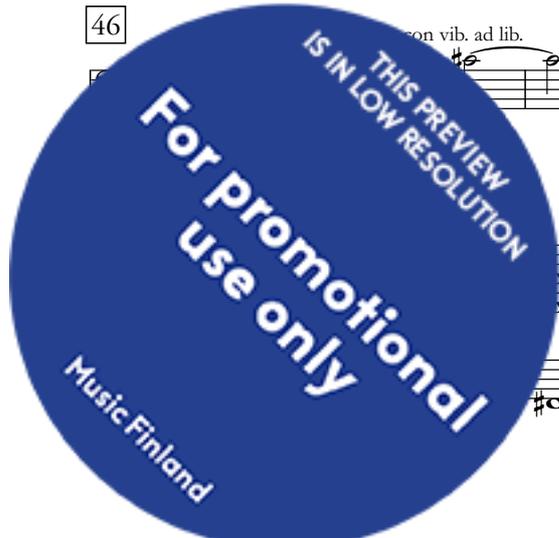
mp p ppp

39

non vib. ppp mf

46

non vib. ad lib. pppp dim. pppp



### Bonus: Enari

♩ 40

Violoncello

Piano

*p* *mf dolce, cantabile*

*ppp* *ppppp* *p* *pp*

5

Violoncello

Piano

*sfz* *pizz.* *p* *pp*

*fff* *sfz* *mp sub.* *mp*

*pp*

8

Violoncello

Piano

*sfz* *p sub.*

*fff* *sfz* *p*

Hermannissa  
29.1.2026

