

Arnold ROSNER

REQUIEM, OP. 59

Kelley Hollis, soprano
Feargal Mostyn-Williams, countertenor
Thomas Elwin, tenor
Gareth Brynmor John, baritone
Crouch End Festival Chorus
David Temple, chorus master
London Philharmonic Orchestra
Nick Palmer, conductor

FIRST RECORDING

ARNOLD ROSNER AND HIS *REQUIEM*

by Walter Simmons

During his fifty-year compositional career, the American composer Arnold Rosner (1945–2013) produced a body of work that combined diverse influences into a powerful and distinctly personal musical voice. His catalogue comprises compositions in nearly every genre, including three operas, eight symphonies, numerous works for orchestra and wind band, several large-scale choral works and many chamber, solo and vocal pieces.

Rosner's musical language was founded upon the harmonic and rhythmic devices of the polyphonic music of the Renaissance and early Baroque. These roots can be found, to a larger or smaller degree, in virtually all his music. To them he added a free triadicism and exotic modalities, intensified in some works by more contemporary harmonic dissonance, enriching this language with the lavish orchestration and emotional drama of turn-of-the-century late Romanticism – and yet, despite its fusion of seemingly incongruous elements, most of his music is readily accessible, even to untutored listeners. What makes Rosner's music worthy of serious consideration, rather than being merely an integration of earlier styles, is the way he shaped his unusual language to encompass an enormous expressive range – far broader than one might imagine possible – from serene beauty to violent rage. The *Requiem*, one of his largest and most ambitious works, embraces this gamut of emotional expression.

Born in New York City in 1945, Rosner took piano lessons as a boy and soon developed a voracious interest in classical music. Some sounds in particular appealed to him – juxtapositions of major and minor triads, as well as modal melodies – and before long he was working these sounds into music of his own. His family, fully aware of the remote prospects of success offered by a career in the composition

of classical music, encouraged him to pursue more practical endeavours, and so he attended the Bronx High School of Science, whence he graduated at the age of fifteen, and then New York University, with a major in mathematics. But all the while he was composing: sonatas, symphonies, concertos and more – not that anyone was especially interested in hearing the fruits of his labours. His composer-heroes at the time were Hovhaness, Vaughan Williams and Nielsen, and their influence is evident in much of his early work.

Graduating from NYU before he turned twenty, Rosner then spent a year at the Belfer Graduate School of Science, continuing his studies in mathematics. But, no longer able to resist the inner drive to pursue musical composition as his primary activity, he entered the University of Buffalo the following September, with a major in music composition. He took this step in 1966, when serialism was the dominant style in university music departments, and young composers were often coerced, directly or indirectly, into adopting it. Rosner often recounted how the Buffalo faculty dismissed his creative efforts with varying degrees of contempt. Later, in describing his educational experience there, he would say that he ‘learned almost nothing’ from these pedants. Although most of his peers capitulated to the pressure to embrace the *style du jour*, Rosner was adamantly opposed to serialism and stubbornly refused to accept a view of music that violated his most fervently held artistic values – and so, in response, his department repeatedly rejected the large orchestral work he had submitted as his dissertation. Realising that they would never accept the kind of music he considered meaningful, he gave up the notion of a doctorate in composition, and decided instead to pursue a degree in music theory, with a dissertation – the first ever – on the music of Alan Hovhaness. He completed this task successfully, and in the process became the first recipient of a doctorate in music granted by the State University of New York.

He devoted the rest of his life to writing the music that represented his personal aesthetic ideals, supporting himself through academic positions at colleges in and around the New York City area. His most enduring position was as Professor of Music at Kingsborough Community College (of the City University of New York), which he held for thirty years, until his death. During the course of his compositional career, his

musical language gradually expanded from its idiosyncratic and intuitive beginnings. The *Requiem*, completed when the composer was 28, illustrates just how broadly his language had expanded, even by this early age. Arnold Rosner died in Brooklyn, in 2013, on his 68th birthday.

Rosner's *Requiem* came about through a set of unusual circumstances. The composer had long been an admirer of the films of the Swedish director Ingmar Bergman, and he had often cited *The Seventh Seal* (1957) as his favourite. The film takes place during the fourteenth century and involves a knight who, having returned from the Crusades, is confounded by the moral contradictions of religion. He decides to challenge Death to a game of chess, in the hope of defeating this adversary of life. The story draws upon many features of especial interest to Rosner: from his own religious and spiritual uncertainties and ambivalence to his love of games like chess, and even his fascination with numerological symbolism.

Sometime in 1971 Rosner became consumed by the idea of adapting Bergman's film into an opera. He wrote to the director to request permission for this adaptation but received no response to his inquiries. Eager to proceed with this project, he began composing anyway. Later that year he decided to travel to Europe for the first time, mostly to meet some of the European composers whose music he admired; but he also intended to try to pressure Bergman for a response to his idea. He finally managed to reach him by phone and posed his request once again. Bergman responded that he had never allowed any of his films to be adapted into any other medium, and was not about to make an exception.

This response was extremely disappointing to Rosner, who had by then written a substantial bit of music for the opera he had in mind. But after several months he arrived at another idea: a full-length Requiem. What he had in mind was one that was non-sectarian, drawing upon biblical texts, secular poetry by French, German and American writers, the Tibetan Book of the Dead and the Jewish liturgy, among other sources. He also imagined how he could repurpose the music he had written for the aborted adaptation of *The Seventh Seal*. He completed the *Requiem* in 1973.

The Seventh Seal refers to a passage in the Book of Revelation, the final book of the New Testament. The theme of this book is a call to repentance and a warning of the disastrous consequences of failing to live according to God's ways, revealed through visions experienced by John, held by church tradition to have been one of the disciples of Jesus. John describes a scroll in Heaven, held together by seven seals. As each seal is removed by God, seven plagues are described. These revelations are followed by visions of seven trumpets, played by seven angels. Another plague is announced by each of the angels.

Rosner gave each movement of his *Requiem* a title which gives some indication of both its form and its content. The first, 'Overture: The Seventh Seal' [1], is scored for large orchestra, including seven trumpets distributed at different points throughout the performing space; the full chorus; and two passages featuring a vocal trio. The movement begins ominously, as a subdued passage leads to a shattering orchestral explosion. Most of the orchestra suddenly drops out, leaving hushed celestial chords. This passage is followed by an aggressive *ostinato* in a five-beat pattern, as a menacing passage arises from the depths of the orchestra. A three-beat *ostinato* follows, together with a stern two-beat passage in a hemiola pattern. As this passage ends, the full chorus enters softly, *a cappella*, with the opening lines, sung in English, describing the seventh seal (Revelation 8). The five-beat *ostinato* returns briefly, until the male vocal trio enters, singing 'Dies irae, Dies illa' from the Latin Requiem text in the style of mediaeval *organum*. A softly mysterious interlude is followed by a forceful passage in multiple simultaneous rhythmic subdivisions. The seven trumpets are then heard, playing ornamented figures in alternation. The alternating figures are gradually compacted together as the tempo increases. The male trio returns, with its Latin quotation presented in ancient *organum* style. The mysterious interlude is repeated, followed by a continuation of the passage from Revelation, sung in hushed tones by the full chorus. As the chorus continues, a cataclysmic earthquake is described, depicted by the full orchestra, led by the seven trumpets. A sustained note in the trumpets brings the movement to an end. This entire movement is taken verbatim from the opening scene of the aborted opera.

The second movement, 'Recitative: *Ein Wort, ein Satz*' [2], provides a considerable contrast: the setting of a poem by the nihilistic German writer Gottfried Benn (1886–1956). The poem, written during the Second World War, is a reflection on the brevity of life, scored for tenor solo and a small ensemble of percussion. The ensemble is used in a manner that suggests the pointillism and *Klangfarbenmelodie* practised by the first generation of serialists, leading Rosner to describe this section wryly as his 'tribute to Anton Webern', although the multicoloured movement is clearly tonal. Although it is the shortest movement of the *Requiem*, it is also one of the most important, as suggested by the recurrence of the line 'und wieder Dunkel, ungeheuer' ('and again the immense darkness') in the final section as something of a symbolic motto for the entire work.

The third movement, 'Toccat: *Musica Satanica*' [3], is one of only two that feature the full orchestra alone; the other is the final movement. It is a ferociously diabolical scherzo, proceeding with relentlessly turbulent frenzy unabated throughout.

It is followed by 'Ballade: *Les Neiges d'antan*' [4], the setting of the 'Ballade des dames du temps jadis' ('Ballad of the Ladies of Time Gone By'), a poem by François Villon (c. 1431–c. 1463), the best-known French poet of the late Middle Ages.¹ The poem contains the oft-quoted refrain 'But where are the snows of yesteryear?' Another commentary on the inexorable passage of time, the setting is scored for soprano solo and reduced orchestra. This movement is an excellent example of Rosner's unusual brand of poignant lyricism. The ornamented melodic line is wide-ranging and highly chromatic, whereas the instrumental accompaniment consists largely of consonant triads, as well as delicately scored passages separating the lines. A sense of tonality is never absent, but the tonal centres shift constantly.

The tender melancholy of the fourth movement is followed by the striking contrast of the 'Sutra: *Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo*' [5], one of the longest sections of the entire work, and perhaps its most unusual. According to Zen Buddhism, 'Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo' is a *sutra*, or aphorism, that, if chanted repeatedly, will ensure a long life. The movement

¹ In *Le Testament*, the collection of his poetry that Villon assembled in 1461, the poem is labelled simply 'Ballade'; the title was expanded to become the 'Ballade des dames du temps jadis' by Clément Marot (himself a major poet) in his 1533 edition of Villon's poems, and the new title stuck.

is scored for full chorus and orchestra, with a central section that features a solo baritone. It begins as the male voices repeatedly chant the ten lines of the Sanskrit *sutra* on one note, with some instrumental reinforcement. Gradually, additional instruments enter over the repeating *sutra*, creating a beautiful hymn-like counterpoint to the single-note *ostinato*. Soon the female voices add to the texture with lines from the Tibetan Book of the Dead, sung in English, that provide a perspective of wisdom to those who have lived proper lives and are in a state of posthumous transition. The texture is further enriched by a reminiscence of the five-beat *ostinato* heard during the first movement. As all these elements are repeated and elaborated, augmented by additional instrumental forces, the volume rises to an extreme point, when it suddenly breaks off. The baritone soloist, accompanied by only a few instruments, then sings, in English, a gruesome depiction of the underworld, where those who have lived evil lives are condemned to excruciating torture and damnation. This passage is followed by an abbreviated return of the opening section with chanting of the ten lines of the *sutra*.

One of the most dramatic contrasts in the *Requiem* occurs with the arrival of the sixth movement, 'Madrigal: To All, to Each' [6], setting a portion of Walt Whitman's famous poem, 'When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd'. Rosner chose a verse from the part called 'Death Carol', which conveys Whitman's serene acceptance of the inevitability of death. In truth, this is the most – or, perhaps, the only – comforting portion of the *Requiem*. It is set for mixed chorus *a cappella*, in the consonant, modal style of the sixteenth-century madrigal, this exemplar reflecting both polyphonic and homophonic usages. Consistent with Rosner's approach to the Renaissance style, he retains the consonant harmony, which he inflects with a chromatic tonal freedom.

The seventh movement, 'Organum: *Lasciate ogni speranza*' [7], returns to the mediaeval *organum* style heard briefly in the first movement, and features the male vocal trio, supported by solo instruments in small groups. The text – taken from Dante's 'Inferno', a section of the fourteenth-century *Divine Comedy* – is the celebrated 'Abandon all hope, ye who enter here.' After the use of only minimal instrumental support, the full orchestra is gradually reintroduced to bring the movement to a close.

There follows a 'Prayer: *Kaddish*' [8] – perhaps the most Romantic movement of the work. It is scored for soprano solo accompanied by the full orchestra, further reinforcing the impression of a Neo-Romantic aria. The text, a standard Jewish prayer, incorporated into the service to acknowledge the recent death of a loved one, is largely in Aramaic, rather than Hebrew. The prayer builds with increasing agony to an anguished climax, before receding in resignation.

The ninth movement, 'Passacaglia: *Libera me*' [9], scored for full chorus and orchestra, is one of the most complex portions of the work. 'Libera Me' is a Roman Catholic responsory associated with the Requiem Mass, though not actually a part of it. It is sung after the Mass but preceding the burial of the deceased. The passacaglia was one of Rosner's favourite forms, and it appears in many of his works; this movement of the *Requiem* is one of his most elaborate efforts in the form. It begins as the bass voices, doubled by the cellos and basses, introduce the passacaglia theme, a thirteen-note melody that includes eleven of the twelve chromatic pitches. In keeping with classic passacaglia form, eighteen fairly strict variations follow, as the music builds in volume, complexity and intensity. After these variations the music breaks off into a free development of elements of the theme, becoming increasingly agitated. When this development seems to reach a peak, a modified version of the cataclysmic final portion of the first movement reappears, leading to the climax of the entire work.

The sustained final note of the preceding movement leads without pause into the final section, '*und wieder Dunkel, ungeheuer*' ('and again the immense darkness') [10], scored for small ensemble with prominent use of the piano – and it is the only movement without an introductory label. As noted earlier, this movement is similar in tone and material to the second movement, '*Ein Wort, ein Satz*'. A mood of mysterious calm prevails throughout, as motifs from several of the preceding movements make their appearances, leading to a subdued conclusion.

Rosner's *Requiem* is notable for its juxtaposition of a wide range of expressive extremes, but also for the delicacy and imaginativeness of instrumental colours that permeate the work. (It is worth noting that at the time he completed the *Requiem*,

Rosner had yet to hear any performance of his orchestral music, beyond sight-readings by student pick-up groups.) The work may be viewed as a contemplation of death and the evanescence of life from a variety of religious and poetic perspectives.

Walter Simmons, musicologist and critic, has written extensively on American composers who maintained an allegiance to traditional musical values. He is the editor of a series of books, 'Twentieth-Century Traditionalists', published by Rowman and Littlefield. He wrote the first two volumes himself (under the Scarecrow Press imprint): Voices in the Wilderness: Six American Neo-Romantic Composers (2004), which considered the lives and works of Barber, Bloch, Creston, Flagello, Giannini and Hanson, and Voices of Stone and Steel: The Music of William Schuman, Vincent Persichetti, and Peter Mennin (2011). As a staunch advocate of the music of Arnold Rosner, he is deeply familiar with much of his output; he and Rosner were close associates for more than forty years, and he is the dedicatee of the Requiem.

Nick Palmer is the distinguished recipient of the Helen M. Thompson Award as America's most outstanding young music director. He is currently the music director of the Lafayette Symphony in Indiana, the North Charleston Pops in South Carolina and the 'Evening under the Stars' music festival in Massachusetts, the principal pops conductor of the Altoona Symphony in Pennsylvania and the distinguished conductor-in-residence at Kentucky Wesleyan College. In addition, he has conducted the Detroit, Greenville, Huntsville, Jacksonville, Nashville, Salt Lake, Santa Barbara, Springfield, Tucson and Virginia Symphonies, the Boulder and Naples Philharmonics, the Chicago Sinfonietta, the Louisville Orchestra and other orchestras across the USA. He has also been active in Europe, where he has conducted the Europa Philharmonie, the Milano Classico Orchestra and the West Bohemia and Lausanne Symphony Orchestras,



and in South America and Mexico, where he has conducted the San Remo Symphony, the National Orchestra of Bolivia, the Sophia Symphony, Sinaloa (OSSLA) and Monterrey (UANL) Symphony in Mexico, and the Medellín (EAFIT) Symphony in Colombia. He conducted the London Philharmonic Orchestra in the second and third volumes of the Toccata Classics series of Arnold Rosner's orchestral music, Volume Two (TOCC 0465) featuring *Five Ko-Ans for Orchestra*, Op. 65, *Unraveling Dances*, Op. 122, and *The Parable of the Law*, Op. 97, and Volume Three (TOCC 0469) with the *Nocturne*, Op. 68, the concert overture *Tempus Perfectum*, Op. 109, and the Sixth Symphony, Op. 64.

Under the direction of **David Temple** since 1984, the Crouch End Festival Chorus is now one of the world's leading symphonic choirs. His recording of Bach's *St John Passion* with the CEFC for Chandos Records was received with glowing reviews. His concert highlights with the Chorus include Mahler's Eighth Symphony and John Adams' *Harmonium* in the presence of the composer. Recent recording work includes music for the film *Rocketman*. He has also prepared the choir for Sir Ray Davies, Ennio Morricone, Hans Zimmer, Oasis and Muse. He has been conductor of the Hertfordshire Chorus since 2000. His commissions include Will Todd's *Mass in Blue*, which has received well over 200 performances. His work as chorus master includes Berlioz's *Grande Messe des morts* under François-Xavier Roth and Britten's *War Requiem* with Semyon Bychkov. He was awarded the MBE in the 2018 New Year's Honours for services to music.



Kelley Hollis, soprano, specialises in contemporary classical music. In 2016 she made her European debut performing as a featured artist with the 'Americké jaro' festival in the Czech Republic. That same year, she appeared as the First Orphan in the Boston Symphony Orchestra concert production of Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* alongside Renée Fleming and Susan Graham.

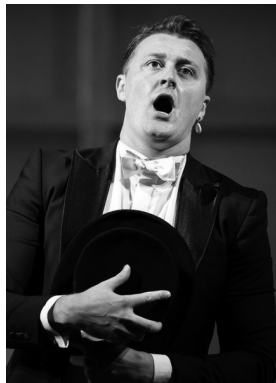
In 2019 she created the role of Juana in the opera *En el ardiente oscuridad* by Omar Najmi. Her other roles include Beth in Mark Adamo's *Little Women*, Micaëla in *La tragédie de Carmen*, Florencia in Daniel Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas*, Harper in Peter Eötvös' *Angels in America*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Eliza in Nico Muhly's *Dark Sisters*, Nina in Thomas Pasatieri's *The Seagull*, Mimi in *La bohème* and Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus*. In 2015 she was the soprano soloist for Mahler's Second Symphony with the Boston University Symphony Orchestra at Symphony Hall. Her most recent concert repertoire includes Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, Handel's *Messiah* and Fauré's *Requiem*. At home in Boston she is the core vocalist of Juventas New Music Ensemble, which regularly performs and premieres works by emerging classical composers.



Thomas Elwin, tenor, is based in London. A former choirboy at St Paul's Cathedral, he is a graduate and now Associate of the Royal Academy of Music, a former young artist at Oper Stuttgart and Associate of the Classical Opera Company. Operatic highlights have included Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* at Oper Stuttgart, Don Ottavio in the English National Opera *Don Giovanni*, Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Bregenz and Sam in *Street Scene* at Oper Koln. Recent concert highlights include Finzi's *Dies Natalis* with the BBC Concert Orchestra on BBC Radio 3, the Mozart Requiem with Barbara Hannigan and the Munich Philharmonic and the Britten *Serenade* with the West German Symphony.



Feargal Mostyn-Williams, countertenor, made his debut in the title role of André Tchaikowsky's *The Merchant of Venice* for Welsh National Opera. Dedicated to expanding the appeal and repertoire of the countertenor voice, he founded Operart, a performance initiative to engage new audiences with opera, and created 'Stories in Song', a *Liederabend* that depicts stories from myths to events of the present day; he has also developed a cross-cultural concert series in the Indian Himalayas. The many companies with which he has performed include Scottish Opera, English National Opera, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and the National Opera Studio.



Gareth Brynmor John, baritone, is in demand for his work in opera, concert and Lieder repertoire. Winner of the Kathleen Ferrier Award, he made his debut with Welsh National Opera singing Schumann (*La bohème*) in 2017. He has also performed with the Buxton Festival, Grimeborn Opera and Opéra de Lille. He has appeared in concert performances with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the Royal Philharmonic, BBC Philharmonic and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestras. He has given recitals at venues that include St John's, Smith Square, Wigmore Hall and King's Place in London and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts in Birmingham, as well as at the King's Lynn Festival and North Norfolk Music Festival, among other festivals.



Founded in 1984, the **Crouch End Festival Chorus** (CEFC) has a reputation as one of the country's leading symphonic choirs, repeatedly commended for its communicative power and versatility. Under its conductor and co-founder David Temple, MBE, it is known for its eclectic repertoire, from performances of traditional classical works to contemporary and specially commissioned pieces. The CEFC works with the top orchestras in the UK and performs regularly for the BBC. It has appeared in concert performances under Valery Gergiev, François-Xavier Roth and Edward Gardner, among others. In constant demand for recording work and live promotions, the CEFC has worked with musicians from the rock and pop world and with television and film composers, its projects including the Grammy-nominated soundtrack for *Rocketman*, music for *Doctor Who* and regular collaborations with Ennio Morricone and Hans Zimmer. CEFC recordings include the *St John Passion* sung in English and Britten's *Saint Nicolas* and *A Ceremony of Carols*.

Sopranos

Rosamund Bell	Mounika Parimi	Katharine Duncan
Rosie Best	Rowan Reiss	Sarah Elliot
Judith Clixby	Davina Ross-Anderson	Natalie Fine
Helen Collier	Imogen Rush	Ida Griffith
Pamela Constantinou	Rachel Seghers	Mary Grove
Flora Cox	Melanie Servante	Pauline Hoyle
Margaret Ellerby	Hannah Shaw	Yola Jacobsen
Liz Forgan	Emily Soppet	Jane Kember
Tanya Forward	Julia Taylor	Emma Kingsley
Denise Haddon	Pamela Vernon	Gaenor Kyffin
Sally Hall	Jenny Vernon	Paula Miller
Genevieve Helsby	Lucy Whitman	Caroline Milton
Sheila Holloway	Rosemary Zolynski	Lesley Murphy
Clare James		Sarah Proudlove
Marianne Johnson	<i>Altos</i>	Maggi Ronson
Emma Lindsey	Catherine Best	Alankar Scheideler
Pinky Millward	Alison Brister	Sue Steel
Kirsty Morrell	Tina Burnett	Jennifer Weston
Sarah Niblock	Chandrika Chevli	

Tenors

Bob Bishop
James Brown
Robert Carlin
Trevor Dawson
Martin Dowling
John Featherstone
Matt Griffin
Steve James
Colin McIntyre
Robin Pietà
John Vernon
Adrian Warner

David Williams
Paul Winter
Steve Wright

Basses
Neil Beston
Hugh Bowden
Bruce Boyd
Michael Brookes
Nick Buxton
Richard Cracknell
Stephen Fellowes

Robert Gorrie
Stephen Greenaway
Carl Heap
Stephen Jullien
Jeff McCracken-Hewson
Johnny Mindlin
Peter Newsom
John Rayfield
Robin White
Alistair Yates

Recognised today as one of the finest orchestras on the international stage, the **London Philharmonic Orchestra** was founded in 1932 by Sir Thomas Beecham. Since then, its Principal Conductors have included Sir Adrian Boult, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt and Kurt Masur. In 2017 Vladimir Jurowski celebrated his tenth anniversary as the Orchestra's Principal Conductor; in September 2021 he will be succeeded by Edward Gardner.

The London Philharmonic Orchestra has been performing at the Royal Festival Hall in the Southbank Centre since it opened in 1951, becoming Resident Orchestra in 1992. It also has flourishing residencies in Brighton and Eastbourne, and performs regularly around the UK. Each summer it plays for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, where it has been Resident Symphony Orchestra for over 50 years. The Orchestra also regularly tours abroad.

In summer 2012 the London Philharmonic Orchestra performed as part of The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Pageant on the River Thames, and was also chosen to record all the world's national anthems for the London 2012 Olympics.

The Orchestra broadcasts regularly on television and radio, and has recorded soundtracks for numerous blockbuster films including *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. It has made many distinguished recordings over the last eight decades and in 2005 began releasing live, studio and archive recordings on its own CD label.

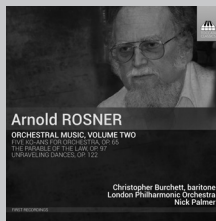
Its website can be found at lpo.org.uk; its Facebook page is at [facebook.com/londonphilharmonicorchestra](https://www.facebook.com/londonphilharmonicorchestra); and its Twitter feed is twitter.com/LPOrchestra

Also available from Toccata Classics

TOCC 0368



TOCC 0408



TOCC 0465



TOCC 0469



Press comment:

- ‘Toccata Classics is doing a much-needed service to this woefully underperformed composer – and to listeners.’
- ‘a far more significant and original voice in recent American music than his obscurity during his lifetime might imply’
- ‘each disc demonstrates new facets of his musical personality’
- ‘brilliantly innovative and thoroughly original’
- ‘compelling [...] a unique musical style’
- ‘more cause for rejoicing’

Texts and Translations

1 Overture: The Seventh Seal

And the lamb came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.
And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half
an hour.

And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets;
And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.
And there were lightnings, voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

—*Revelation 8*

Dies irae,
Dies illa.

*Day of wrath,
That day.*

— *Latin Requiem Mass (Sequence)*

2 Recitative: *Ein Wort, ein Satz*

Ein Wort, ein Satz–: aus Chiffren steigen
erkanntes Leben, jäher Sinn,
die Sonne steht, die Sphären schweigen,
und alles ballt sich zu ihm hin.
Ein Wort – ein Glanz, ein Flug, ein Feuer,
ein Flammenwurf, ein Sternenstrich –
und wieder Dunkel, ungeheuer,
im leeren Raum um Welt und Ich.

—*Gottfried Benn, Gedicht (1941)*

*A word, a phrase – from ciphers climb
known life, sudden sense.
The sun stops, the Spheres no longer chime,
and all thickens around, dark and dense.
A word – a gleam, a flight, a spark,
a blaze, star-strike on the sky –
and again the immense darkness
and empty space around world and I.*

—*transl. James Owens*

4] Ballade: *Les Neiges d'antan*

Dictes moy où, nèn quel pays,
Est Flora, la belle Romaine;
Archipiada, ne Thaïs,
Qui fut sa cousine [...];
Echo, parlant quand bruyt on maine
Dessus rivière ou sus estan,
Qui beaulté ot trop plus qu'humaine?
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!

Où est la très sage Heloïs,
Pour qui fut chastré et puis moyne
Pierre Esbaillart à Saint-Denys?
Pour son amour eut cest essoyne.
Semblablement, où est la royne
Qui commanda que Buridan
Fust jetté en ung sac en Saine?
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!
[...]

Et Jehanne, la bonne Lorraine,
Qu'Englois bruslèrent à Rouan;
Où sont-ilz, Vierge souveraine?
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!

Prince, nènquerez de sepmaine
Où elles sont, ne de cest an,
Qu'à ce reffrain ne vous remaine:
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!

*Tell me where, in which country
Is Flora, the beautiful Roman;
Archipiada [Alcibiades], and Thaïs
Who was her [...] cousin;
Echo, speaking when one makes noise
Over river or on lake,
Who had a beauty too much more than human?
But, where are the snows of yesteryear!*

*Where is the very wise Heloise,
For whom was castrated, and then [made] a monk,
Pierre Esbaillart [Abelard] in Saint-Denis?
For his love he suffered this sentence.
Similarly, where is the Queen [Marguerite de
Bourgogne]
Who ordered that Buridan
Be thrown in a sack into the Seine?
But, where are the snows of yesteryear!*

...

*And Joan [of Arc], the good [woman from] Lorraine
That the English burned in Rouen;
Where are they, oh sovereign Virgin?
But, where are the snows of yesteryear!*

*Prince, do not ask me in the whole week
Where they are – neither in this whole year,
Lest I bring you back to this refrain:
But, where are the snows of yesteryear!*

—François Villon, *Le Testament* (1461)

5] Sutra: Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo
[Ten-Verse-Kannon Sutra for Prolonging Life]

Kan Ze On
Na Mu Butsu
Yo Butsu U In
Yo Butsu U En
Bup Po So En
Jo Raku Ga Jo
Cho Nen Kan Ze On
Bo Nen Kan Ze On
Nen Nen Ju Shin Ki
Nen Nen Fu Ri Shin

Kanzeon:
*Veneration to the Buddha
With Buddha I have origin;
With Buddha I have affinity;
Affinity with Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha;
Eternity, joy, self, and purity.
Mornings my thoughts are Kanzeon;
Evenings my thoughts are Kanzeon;
Thought after thought arise in the mind;
Thought after thought are not separate from
mind.*

Within those radiances, the natural sound of Truth will reverberate like a thousand thunders. The sound will come with a rolling reverberation. Fear not. Flee not. Be not terrified. Know them to be the intellectual faculties of thine own light.

The Lord of Death will place round thy neck a rope and drag thee along; He will cut off thy head, extract thy heart, pull out thy intestines, lick up thy brain, drink thy blood and eat thy flesh; But thou wilt be incapable of dying. Although thy body be hacked to pieces, it will revive again and again. The repeated hacking will cause intense pain and torture.

—*Bardo Thodol, or The Tibetan Book of the Dead*

6] Madrigal: To All, to Each

Come lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving,
arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death.

—*Walt Whitman, When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd (1865)*

7 Organum: *Lasciate ogni speranza*

Lasciate ogni speranza,
voi ch'entrare.

8 Prayer: *Kaddish*

Yis'gadal v'yis'kadash sh'mei rabaw
b'al'maw di v'raw khir'usei
v'yam'likh mal'khusei
b'chayeikhon uv'yomeikhon
uv'chayei d'khol beis yis'roeil
ba'agawlaw uvis'man kawriv
v'im'ru: Omein.
Y'hei sh'mei rabaw m'avravrah
la'olam ul'al'mei al'mayav
yis'barakh v'yish'tabach v'yis'po'ar v'yis'romam
v'yis'nasei v'yis'hadar v'yis'aleh
v'yis'halal sh'mei d'kud'shav b'rikh hu
leilaw min kawli bir'khawsaw
v'shirawsaw toosh'bchasaw v'nechamawsaw
da'ameerawn b'awl'maw
v'im'ru: Omein.
Y'hei sh'lavmaw rabaw min sh'mayav
v'chayim awleinu v'al kol yis'roeil
v'im'ru: Omein.
Oseh shalom bim'roamov
hu ya'asei shalom awleinu
v'al kol Yis'roeil
v'im'ru: Omein.

*Abandon all hope,
you who enter here.*

—Dante Alighieri, *Divina Commedia* (1320)

*May His great Name grow exalted and sanctified
in the world that He created as He willed.*

*May He give reign to His kingship
in your lifetimes and in your days,
and in the lifetimes of the entire Family of Israel,
swiftly and soon.*

Now say: Amen.

*May His great Name be blessed
forever and ever.*

*Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted,
extolled, mighty, upraised and lauded
be the Name of the Holy One, blessed is He
beyond any blessing and song,
praise and consolation
that are uttered in the world.*

Now say: Amen.

*May there be abundant peace from Heaven
and life upon us and upon all Israel.*

Now say: Amen.

*He who makes peace in His heights,
may He make peace,
upon us and upon all Israel.*

Now say: Amen.

—*Jewish Liturgical (Aramaic/Hebrew, Ashkenazic pronunciation)*

9] Passacaglia: *Libera me*

*Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna,
in die illa tremenda:*

*Quando coeli movendi sunt et terra,
Dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem.*

*Tremens factus sum ego, et timeo,
dum discussio venerit,
atque ventura ira.*

*Dies irae, dies illa,
calamitatis et miseriae,
dies magna et amara valde.
Dum veneris judicare saeculum.*

*Deliver me, O Lord, from death eternal,
on that dreadful day:
when the heavens and the earth shall quake,
when thou shalt come to judge the world by fire.*

*I am seized by trembling, and I fear
until the judgement should come,
and I also dread the coming wrath.*

*O that day, day of wrath,
day of calamity and misery,
momentous day, and exceedingly bitter,
when thou shalt come to judge the world.*

—Catholic Requiem Mass

Recorded on 23, 24 and 28 July 2019 at Abbey Road Studios, London
Performance materials prepared by Jeffrey Grossman and Carson Cooman
Engineer: Jonathan Allen
Producer: Walter Simmons

Music available from the Estate of Arnold Rosner; for further information,
visit www.ArnoldRosnerMusic.com

Booklet essay: Walter Simmons
Cover photograph: Walter Simmons
Cover design: David M. Baker (david@notneverknow.com)
Typesetting and lay-out: Kerrypress, St Albans

Executive Producer: Martin Anderson

© Toccatà Classics, London, 2020

© Toccatà Classics, London, 2020



ARNOLD ROSNER *Requiem*, Op. 59

Requiem, Op. 59 (1973)

1 I	Overture: <i>The Seventh Seal</i>	11:17
2 II	Recitative: <i>Ein Wort, ein Satz</i>	3:28
3 III	Toccata: <i>Musica Satanica</i>	5:08
4 IV	Ballade: <i>Les Neiges d'antan</i>	6:15
5 V	Sutra: <i>Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo</i>	9:48
6 VI	Madrigal: <i>To All, to Each</i>	6:28
7 VII	Organum: <i>Lasciate ogni speranza</i>	5:56
8 VIII	Prayer: <i>Kaddish</i>	6:43
9 IX	Passacaglia: <i>Libera me –</i>	8:50
10 X	<i>und wieder Dunkel, ungeheuer</i>	5:27

Kelley Hollis, soprano 4 8

TT 69:22

Feargal Mostyn-Williams, countertenor 1 7

Thomas Elwin, tenor 1 2 7

FIRST RECORDING

Gareth Brynmor John, baritone 1 5 7

Crouch End Festival Chorus 1 5 6 9

David Temple, conductor 6

and chorus master

London Philharmonic Orchestra 1–5 7–10

Nick Palmer, conductor 1–5 7–10